UNIVERSITAT POLITÈCNICA DE VALÈNCIA

Higher Polytechnic School of Gandia

ENHANCE Alliance Transmedia Communication Plan

Master's Thesis

Master's degree in Transmedia Communication

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ACADEMIC YEAR: 2022/2023

Transmedia Communication Plan for ENHANCE Alliance

Abstract and Keywords

ENHANCE Alliance is a cluster of seven highly-qualified Technological universities. All of which have a high number of students and stakeholders to reach out to. From the current status of their social media platforms and events, the turnout has shown to have a low engagement rate and is becoming an area of increasing concern throughout the Alliance.

Audience engagement is the key concept that distinguishes traditional one-way marketing communications from media brands and is the alliance's overall goal. People want to participate in stories that can be passed on, as long as it's the right storyline for the right audience and they can actively help identify and repurpose the messages they think their community might be interested in. Engagement includes a wide range of activities, from broadcasting conversations and posting comments on blogs or articles, to creating new content, parodies, and additional stories. In addition to content creation, editing and distribution, active participation is based on complementary concepts: culture, community, and politics. Surveys will be conducted to get insights & opinions from anyone who is involved or not involved with the Alliance to measure the information exposure as well as collect the metrics of engagement on each platform to see the difference from the beginning of working in the Alliance and the current state it is in.

Overall internal communication is a reflection of the organization's brand. ENHANCE and the rest of the alliances are constantly working on progressing and because of this, there are many things still unsettled that can explain the lack of engagement. Also, incorporating examples of the current workflow that is working effectively will be shown throughout this dissertation.

1. Keywords:
- Transmedia
- Communication plan
- Engagement
- Higher education

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- Internal communication

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1. Motivation

This dissertation is the result of my time as an intern for the ENHANCE Alliance through the Universitat Politécnica de Valencia. Coming from the United States of America, it was important to me to integrate myself in the university and most importantly be a part of a project like ENHANCE Alliance. My skills in public relations, social media, and overall the communications world opened up the opportunity to join the communication's department of the alliance. When I was brought onto the team, it was evident that there was a big goal to reach and each and every person part of the alliance was making a great effort to achieve it. Although ENHANCE Alliance was just starting to develop more thoroughly, the roots were planted and ready for us to deliver and help flourish the project. It was an experience that was necessary for me to learn how to work alongside many educators, students, and decision makers each having a very different personal background. One of the things that unified us was breaking the language barrier and also the acceptance of allowing me, a non-European, to be a part of a project like ENHANCE Alliance. ENHANCE Alliance's acceptance with their internal team is mirrored externally with their brand image and mission. Being part of ENHANCE Alliance has opened up many doors for me in my career and as well as the experience of working in the communication department, it allowed me to practice the importance of transmedia communications. From the many tactics that we were taught in the classroom, ENHANCE Alliance allowed me to practice those tactics and I now share how ENHANCE Alliance can continue to fulfill their goals even further with this Transmedia Communication Plan.

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2. Introduction

This dissertation will focus on the European University of Technology, ENHANCE Alliance's transmedia communication plan that will benefit both internal and external communication. According to Cornelissen and Cornelissen (2017, p.5), corporate communication is "a management function that offers a framework for the effective coordination of all internal and external communication with the overall purpose of establishing and maintaining favorable reputations with stakeholders groups upon which the organization is dependent"(Akbayır, 2019). In the corporate communication strategies, transmedia storytelling is actively enabling each communication platform to form (Akbayır, 2019). Transmedia storytelling is the main instrument for Enhance Alliance's communication plan to improve its reach. To understand better, transmedia is a type of narrative in which the story unfolds through multiple media and communication platforms. (1) Researchers have stated that strong corporate cultures should emphasize cohesion, participation, and co-operation as corporate values (2005, p. 255).

2.1 Objectives of TFM

The overall objectives of this dissertation are:

- Create a transmedia communication plan for ENHANCE Alliance to facilitate internal and external communication.
- Create a narrative to communicate to their audience.

The intention of the objectives is to understand the transmedia communication strategy deficiencies in ENHANCE Alliance and present a solution to increase their engagement and spread their research-intensive university to students and stakeholders. ENHANCE Alliance's transmedia communication plan will help reach its goal of creating a common European education and research university.

3. Research and Diagnosis

3.1 Corporate Analysis

3.1.1. ENHANCE Alliance History

The ENHANCE Alliance was created in 2020 as part of the ERASMUS+ program European University Initiative with the aim to develop one joint European campus, free of physical, administrative, or educational barriers. ENHANCE Alliance with the rest of 40 ongoing Alliances are aiming the European Union to create the European Universities Initiative to create the European Area of Education and Research. ENHANCE Alliance's mission is to promote responsible social transformation and to promote the development and use of science and technology for the benefit of society. After working internally with the communication department the information from their social media platforms is evident that the projection of the intention and the results are not the ones the program projection at creation was supposed to have.

In specific, their overall exposure and engagement is the biggest problem and we can observe the deficiencies by understanding the data from their social platforms and in involvement in the Alliance. Also if we can evaluate their current corporate social responsibility (CSR) communication this will render the information that the Alliance's transmedia storytelling is lacking etc.

3.1.2. History of Erasmus+ Program

The Erasmus program offers young people and participants of all ages the qualifications and skills they require for meaningful participation in political society, intercultural competence, and successful labor force transition. It is a high-quality inclusive education and training program that also includes informal and non-formal learning. Building on the program's accomplishments from 2014 to 2020, Erasmus+ redoubles its efforts to increase the opportunities open to more people and organizations while concentrating on its qualitative impact and making a

contribution to more inclusive, cohesive, environmentally friendly, and technologically advanced societies.

In a continuously changing, increasingly mobile, multicultural, and digital society, European individuals must be better equipped with the required knowledge, skills, and competencies (European Union, 2019). Spending time studying, learning, and working in another region should become the norm. Everyone should have the opportunity to learn two languages in addition to their native tongue. The program is a critical component in achieving the European Education Area's goals, as well as the Digital Education Action Plan 2021-2027, the European Union Youth Strategy, and the European Union Work Plan for Sport (2021-24) (European Union, 2019).

As the COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated, education is more important than ever in guaranteeing a quick recovery and promoting fair opportunities for all. As part of this recovery, the Erasmus+ program expands its inclusive character by providing socio-educational and professional development possibilities for people throughout Europe and beyond, intending to leave no one behind (European Union, 2019).

Increasing equal chances, the program will reach out to people of all ages and from various cultural, social, and economic backgrounds more and better. It is at the center of the program's efforts to reach out to individuals who have fewer possibilities, such as people with disabilities and migrants, as well as European Union residents living in distant places or experiencing socio-economic hardships (European Union, 2019). As a result, the program will encourage its participants, particularly young people, to engage in civic society and learn to participate in it, enhancing knowledge of European Union common values (European Union, 2019). The program will continue to empower young people and encourage their involvement in democratic life, including supporting activities related to the European Year of Youth. The program will continue to empower young people and promote their participation in democratic life, mainly through supporting activities related to the European Year of Youth 2022, which was declared in September 2021 during the State of the Union address (European Union, 2019).

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Furthermore, building digital skills and competencies in forward-looking domains like climate change, clean energy, artificial intelligence, robots, big data analysis, and so on is critical for Europe's future sustainable growth and integration (European Union, 2019). The program may make a significant contribution by promoting innovation and bridging Europe's knowledge, skills, and competencies gap. Through skill and innovation, EU businesses must become more competitive. Their stakeholders, such as individuals, institutions, organizations, and society as a whole, will gain from this investment in knowledge, skills, and competencies by contributing to long-term growth and ensuring equity, prosperity, and social inclusion in Europe and beyond (European Union, 2019).

Another issue is the Europe-wide trend of limited democratic engagement and low levels of knowledge and awareness about European issues and their influence on all European people's lives (European Union, 2019). Many people are hesitant or unable to actively engage and participate in their communities or in the political and social life of the European Union (European Union, 2019). The future of the European Union hinges on the strengthening of European identity and the participation of young people in political processes. This problem can also be addressed through non-formal learning activities aimed at improving young people's skills and competencies, as well as their active citizenship (European Union, 2019).

Projects should be constructed in an environmentally friendly manner and incorporate green practices in all aspects, following the European Union's aims for making its economy more sustainable (European Union, 2019). When designing their projects, the organizations and participants should take an environmentally friendly approach, encouraging them to discuss and learn about environmental issues—allowing them to think about what they can do at their level and help them develop alternative, greener ways to carry out their activities (European Union, 2019).

Supporting and facilitating transnational and international cooperation between organizations in education, training, youth, and sports is critical for equipping

people with more fundamental skills, reducing early school dropout, and recognizing skills acquired through formal, informal, and non-formal learning (European Union, 2019). It promotes the exchange of ideas, the dissemination of best practices and experience, and the development of digital capacities, all of which contribute to high-quality education and social cohesion. One of the most apparent success stories of the European Union is the Erasmus+ Programme. It draws on the successes of more than 30 years of European programs in education, training, youth, and sport, focusing on both intra-European and international cooperation (European Union, 2019).

Since the Erasmus + Program has been around for a while, it has gone through its trials and has molded into the perfect example of how to run a successful nationwide program for education (European Union, 2019). ENHANCE Alliance can advance faster because of this program and can better differentiate itself from it to stand out more (European Union, 2019). Analyzing the workflow of this program can be of great benefit for the overall communications transmedia plan of ENHANCE Alliance.

3.1.3.Corporate Identity

Being introduced to ENHANCE Alliance the description of the alliance was constructed broadly which led to some confusion internally in the different departments. When the objectives of the alliance are not clear there is a higher chance that the corporate identity is not fully defined. Creating a concrete document of the corporate identity can help establish a more effective workflow and also consistency. ENHANCE Alliance has all the pieces it needs to have a solid corporate identity, and the objective of this dissertation is to gather all the pieces and organize them accordingly. The corporate identity can add value to the "corporate brand" and increase the loyalty of the stakeholders (Fill & Markwick, 1995). According to Fill & Marwick the "Corporate identity is the organization's presentation of itself to its various stakeholders and the means by which it distinguishes itself from all other organizations"(Fill & Markwick, 1995). Having a document with such information about the alliance adds clarity for any of those

wanting to participate, incorporate, and mainly to reach stakeholders to maintain long term support. According to Bernstein, 1984; Marguiles, 1977, the way stakeholders perceive an organization's identity cues shapes an image which is formed in their minds (Fill & Markwick, 1995). The corporate image can be presented either deliberately such as planned content and press releases or accidentally meaning by internal comments or comments from the media. ENHANCE Alliance's main goals and objectives from the previous graphic indicate that their focus is on higher-education European and globally. Having this clear mission and vision starts to construct some important aspects for their corporate identity. Overall, because their mission is involved in the education sector, ENHANCE Alliance's corporate identity should be developed carefully and professionally. From (Balmer, 1995; Hatch and Schultz, 1997) point of view, the collective interest in the construct of strategy, and the value in relation to corporate identity management, is then primarily based upon the alliance mission and vision statements that provide an overall unifying theme and goal for both motivating and focusing the internal team, and for creating a coherent unique corporate image across all their publications and also differentiating the alliance from its competitors (Cornelissen & Elving, 2003).
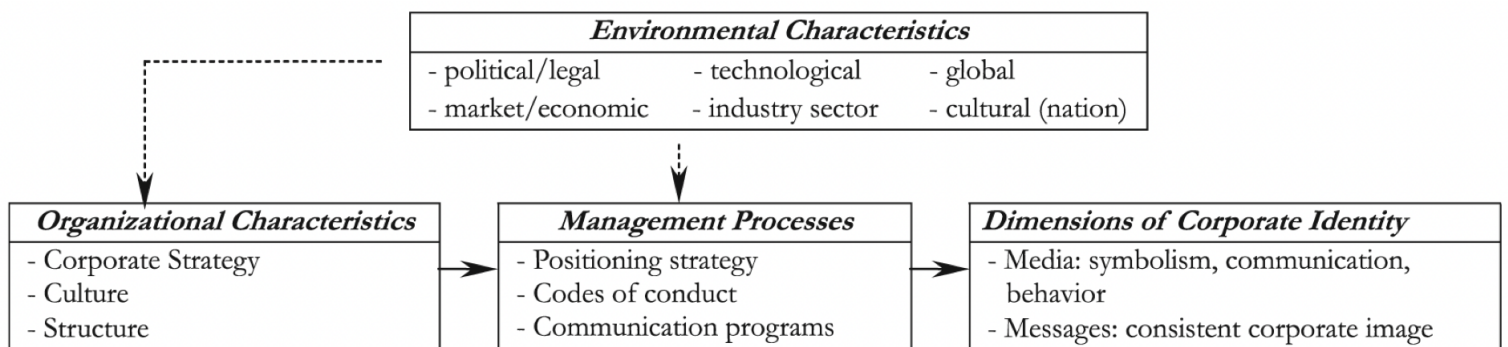
Conceptual framework for the study of corporate identity management, Graphic from (Cornelissen & Elving, 2003)

The figure above gives a quick breakdown of the components on managing the corporate's identity. Understanding not only your internal values and characteristics, environmental characteristics play an important role in solidifying the alliance's corporate identity. Clearing these gaps in the early stages can create a smoother

outreach for stakeholders and a mutual understanding internally of how to carry out the corporate identity in each department.

Therefore the vision for ENHANCE Alliance is to create a new type of tight knitted European networks, enabling student and staff mobility, innovative forms of learning and creating engagement with society on many levels. Sustainability, digitalization, and environmental impact is what drives the goals for the alliance and opening paths targeting larger diverse groups of people.

The internal team of ENHANCE Alliance consists of European students, professors to highly experienced professionals such as researchers, 7 European universities and members from International Affairs. Having a wide variety of members in the alliance gives the alliance a great advantage to carry out these eleven strategic goals:

1. The ENHANCE Education Strategy focuses on providing students with a rich and diversified joint educational offer and an opportunity to customize their journeys across the ENHANCE network ("TU Berlin", n.d.).
2. Exposing their students to virtual and physical mobility ("TU Berlin", n.d.).
3. Commitment to providing a balance between on-campus & off-campus education as well as the opportunity for switching between physical and remote attendance ("TU Berlin", n.d.).

ENHANCE ALLIANCE SETS ELEVEN STRATEGIC GOALS FOR EUROPEAN HIGHER EDUCATION

4. Co-creation for developing and implementing education as well as strengthening engagement with key stakeholders and a transdisciplinary approach to research-based education ("TU Berlin", n.d.).
5. Implementing a holistic approach to education by creating international student teams from different educational and cultural backgrounds (Bayramov, 2016).

6. The ENHANCE Alliance is committed to green and digital transitions. As a result, the Education Strategy focuses on sustainability, equipping students with sustainable thinking (Bayramov, 2016).

7. Providing students with innovative, digitally enhanced learning environments and applying student-centered teaching ("TU Berlin", n.d.).

8. Strengthening the links between education, research and innovation.

9. Focusing on diversity and gender equality as well as life-long learning with an international perspective. This way the strategy ensures social diversity of the student body, enhancing access, participation and completion for groups with fewer opportunities ("TU Berlin", n.d.).

10. Widening the spectrum of beneficiaries of the educational offer through an enhanced life-long learning provision (Bayramov, 2016).

11. Underline the need to eliminate barriers to effective international cooperation in education by promoting necessary regulatory changes (Bayramov, 2016).

3.1.4. Corporate Visual Identity

According to Van Riel and Van den Ban "A corporate visual identity (CVI) consists of a name, a symbol and/or logo, typography, color, a slogan and – very often – additional graphical elements. The logo or corporate symbol has the potential to express organizational characteristics" (Bosch, Elving, Jong, 2002).

ENHANCE Alliance began with using a simple yet colorful logo to represent their organization. The star is made up of the number seven which represents the seven universities that form ENHANCE Alliance. There are also five colors which can cause issues later down the line when it comes down to graphic design. Having too many colors can cause a lack of fluidity throughout designs and it is difficult to always incorporate all the   colors represented.

ENHANCE Alliance logo 2021

As we can see the main part of the logo is a star with the number seven and to tone it down a bit, the typography is simple and clean. Throughout this dissertation, there will be shown some changes that have been made in the logo and the overall visual identity of the organization. Making the simple changes to the logo shown later will be one of the first steps leading to a cohesive transmedia strategy.

3.1.5.Corporate Culture

What is Corporate Culture?

As defined in the (ASSE pdf) "Corporate culture is defined as the beliefs, values and behaviors that are consistent among all members of the corporation." An organization's essential qualities can be defined by establishing a foundation of common beliefs, which results in an attitude that sets it apart from all others. These values are key for employees to hold because it tends to persist even when membership changes (Molenaar, Brown, Caile, Smith, 2002:19).

As also defined in the article "*4 Strategies for Positive Corporate Culture in*

Meetings":

"Your corporate culture is essentially a distillation of your business's beliefs, behaviors, values, standards, and a general sense of the way things are done. Taking the time to design, create and promote a positive culture can help employees to

enjoy their jobs more and can help to persuade customers or clients to do business with you too." (ViewSonic, 2021).

As for ENHANCE alliance, their main objectives are a reflection of their mission which is involved in the education sector. The focus of Enhance Alliance is influenced by current societal topics and creating a space to educate and make a change for the future of the world. According to the ENHANCE alliance article "*ENHANCE alliance presented to Brussels*" is a summary of developing the European vocation of ENHANCE and its foundational principles that help form their corporate values.

- ENHANCE alliance will achieve their European Education Area by driving significant organizational change at all levels of Higher Education Institutions (ENHANCE university, 2022).

- Their Higher Education Innovator System will make it possible for faculty, staff, nonacademics, and students to work together to create the future European University of Technology (ENHANCE university, 2022).

- Create seamless mobility pathways for all across ENHANCE organizations (ENHANCE university, 2022).

- Work alongside stakeholders such as, industry, professional organizations, national and European university organizations to encourage the required regulatory adjustments and reform their institutions in preparation for the future (ENHANCE university, 2022).

- Their core goal is to empower individuals. To ensure that their students, researchers, and others seeking higher education can fully realize their potential, regardless of socioeconomic status, cultural origin, or physical and mental disability, they will establish a values-based, inclusive educational

model through a participatory process (ENHANCE university, 2022).

- The European University, is a vital component of European society, complies to the knowledge square and quadruple helix principles in all of its endeavors (ENHANCE university, 2022).

- Combining their strengths in engineering, science, humanities, and social sciences offer a strong research-led foundation for value-based education and knowledge creation with business, government, and civil society (ENHANCE university, 2022).

- Promote active participation in the management and operation of the alliance allowing for shared responsibility.

- Identify individuals who are having learning difficulties and look for potential solutions by bringing awareness to diversity and finding potential solutions by taking diversity into consideration.

- Promote a system of constant evaluation of the educational process by all its members.

Therefore, its values can be summarized as follows:

VALUES

The European values referred to in the Treaty of Lisbon form the basis for all activities within the ENHANCE Alliance to create common European education and research

Equality and human rights for all citizens are the basis for European integration, underpinning all policy and encompassing all areas. Educational opportunities and exchange within the European University should be accessible to all, independent of economic background, special needs or family circumstances. Our ombudsperson for diversity will ensure that these factors are taken into account in all our activities.

Freedom of thought, autonomy in and ability for critical thinking is crucial to the development of technology and science in the service of humanity. A student-centered, challenge-based approach to learning will enhance critical thinking and enable progress and innovation. Enhanced freedom of movement between our institutions will foster a common European identity among all members of the Alliance.

In order to ensure democratic procedures, ENHANCE endorses a participatory governance structure and decision-making process, characterised by openness, mutual respect and broad participation of relevant groups, which include all members of university as well as organisations representing societal interests. Students as main stakeholders of the ENHANCE Alliance have a powerful voice in the governance structure and are co-creators of the educational offers.

The value and dignity of the human being needs to be central. Our ENHANCE Education Strategy will ensure that respect for the individual forms the basis for all our teaching, learning, research and administration.

ENHANCE builds on the concept of the rule of law as a cornerstone of our society. Our cooperation is based on a clear set of rules, focusing on the creation of a transparent system that provides students with information and certainty regarding the academic recognition process.

ABOUT US- Values (ENHANCE university, 2022)

In the organization chart below you can see how their value of equality and inclusiveness is represented:

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17
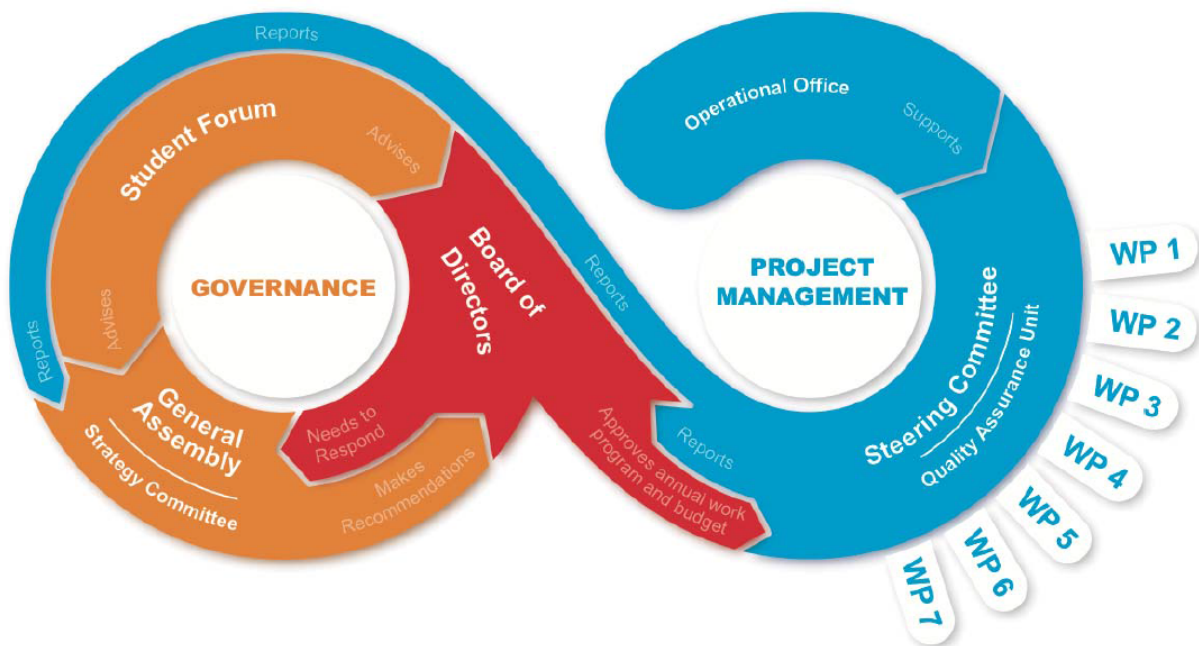
Democratic and inclusive governance (ENHANCE university, 2022)

3.1.6.Corporate Personality

As Saikat Banerjee explains (2016):

> "…both the corporate personality and the individual product brand personalities of the organization may play instrumental roles in shaping the consumer's brand preference. For example, if a consumer is exposed to a product advertisement highlighting the product brand personality and to another corporate advertisement emphasizing the personality of the organization, both of the ads are likely to influence the way the consumer will identify the brand. Consistency between the product brand personality and corporate personality may lead toward increasing preference for the brand."

The corporate personality can be constructed through the social media channels ENHANCE alliance currently utilizes. Creating a successful transmedia dissemination plan is key for the alliance's corporate personality. Having a transmedia dissemination plan can help increase the alliance's brand and expand the number of participants.

Currently ENHANCE alliance's communication department is in charge of their social media dissemination. While the department is made up of interns and professors that vary in age and social media knowledge, there is still an important component missing in the department. The department needs to be made up of personnel that are integrated and committed to be more permanent in the alliance, since with interns there is a base number of hours that they cannot be exceeded and this creates a limit in the dissemination.

Contracting a Social Media Manager and Content Designer as being the main personnel creating the transmedia dissemination and being the guidance for the interns can create a stronger team and social media dissemination. The interns are a vital part of their communication department because they are integrated in the educational world as many are currently in university. One of ENHANCE alliance's main demographic to reach are students ages 18-27. These age groups typically utilize social media as their way to follow and participate with their favorite brands. The importance is to use their Instagram to reach these students that are interested in the same values of ENHANCE alliance and to do so their posts should show their personality.

3.1.7. SWOT Analysis

The SWOT Analysis is formed by four variables that aim to identify the strengths and weaknesses of an organization and the opportunities and threats in the environment (Dyson, 2002).

- Strengths
- Weaknesses
- Opportunities
- Threats

These four points help analyze an organization internally and externally. The strengths and weaknesses refer to the company's internal factors. That is why it is easier to work on these points as they are elements that can be acted on directly and over which the company has control.

On the other hand, the opportunities and threats are affected by external factors that affect the organization. There is less control over these points because these variables do not depend solely on the company's control capacity, since they depend not only on the company's actions but also on the environment in which it operates.

SWOT ANALYSIS

S Strengths
- Hybrid program
- Main language is English.
- Available on multiple social media platforms.
- Young and innovative.

W Weaknesses
- Not international
- Started right before COVID-19
- Not enough image recognition
- Lack of communication and social media strategy.

O Opportunities
- Internship opportunity for university students.
-

T Threats/Risk
- Similar to its European University competitors.
- Newer than other European universities.
-

Strengths:

- Being a hybrid program allows more people from outside all over Europe to participate and to have access to their program.
- Having English be their main language for all communication gives a universal understanding to all.
- ENHANCE alliance is currently available on Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube, and Facebook. Having multiple channels allows different target groups to reach them and it also expands their program's image.
- Having one of their main targets being university students, the program is organized innovatively and also has many opportunities to grow and change along with their audience.

Weaknesses:

- Although this program is European, not being an international program reduces the growth opportunity.

- This program began right before COVID-19 and as others, it affected their program growth and also created limits as far as traveling and doing any in person events.

- Considering their program started less than 2 years ago, they are not very recognized compared to the current competitors.

- The organizers of this program are people who do this as a side project and is not their primary career. This can affect the lack of organization of certain departments considering …

Opportunities:

- Having internships for university students is a great opportunity because it allows the program to work hand in hand with one of their main target groups. This not only benefits the actual European alliance but also gives the university student a great opportunity to work alongside people that are from other European countries. My personal experience with the program has helped me gain new networks as well as learn more about European : university culture and workspace.

- With the current COVID-19 pandemic, ENHANCE alliance can use that as a way to guide some of their events and communications. Since one of their goals is digitalization, this can force them into trying new digitization methods to practice in the alliance.

Threats:

- ENHANCE alliance is part of the 41 European universities that are all promoting European values and identity, and revolutionizing the quality and competitiveness of European higher education. It can be difficult to stand out when you have many competitors with the same goal.

This is the current state of the alliance's SWOT analysis. Having these clear allows the alliance to improve or avoid some of these points that are prominent in the analysis. Their greatest weakness can be overcome with this dissertation and starting with that can then help eliminate some of the current weaknesses and find ways to counteract their threats.

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3.2. Social media platform analysis

3.2.1. LinkedIn
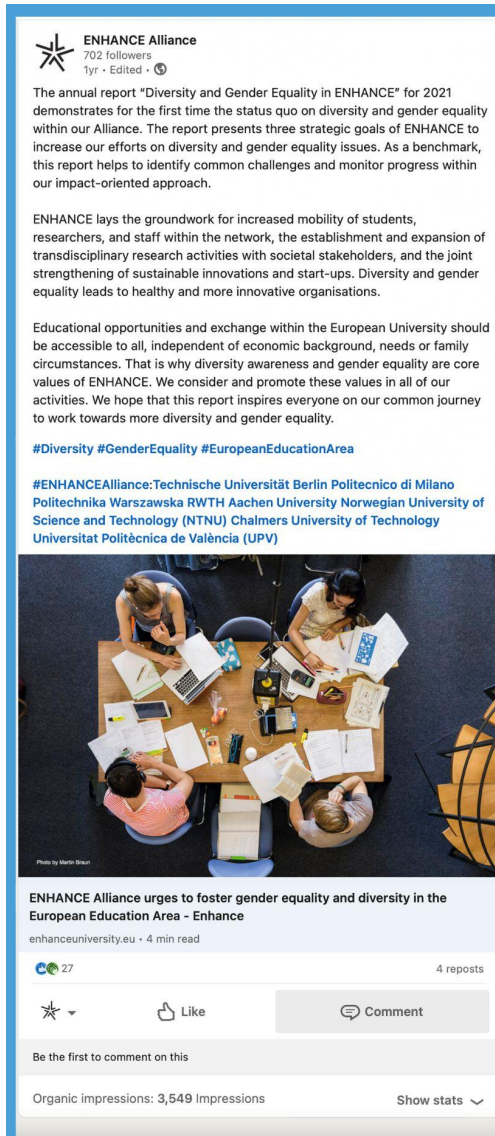
Long post with a 4 minute article linked.

The first LinkedIn post that is currently public on their account from January 24, 2022. This shows to be ENHANCE Alliance's first LinkedIn post and it's a high quality image with a genuine text. The text is recognizing the goals achieved and goals set to be achieved in the new year. This is a well organized post because it is being transparent to their audience and it is more of an informational post rather than a call to action publication. This is important because in a social media strategy plan you should have a good mix of posts with different outcomes. This specific post also shows an example of a good transmedia publication because it starts off as a small post but then there is another form of media that that post leads you to which is an article on their main website.

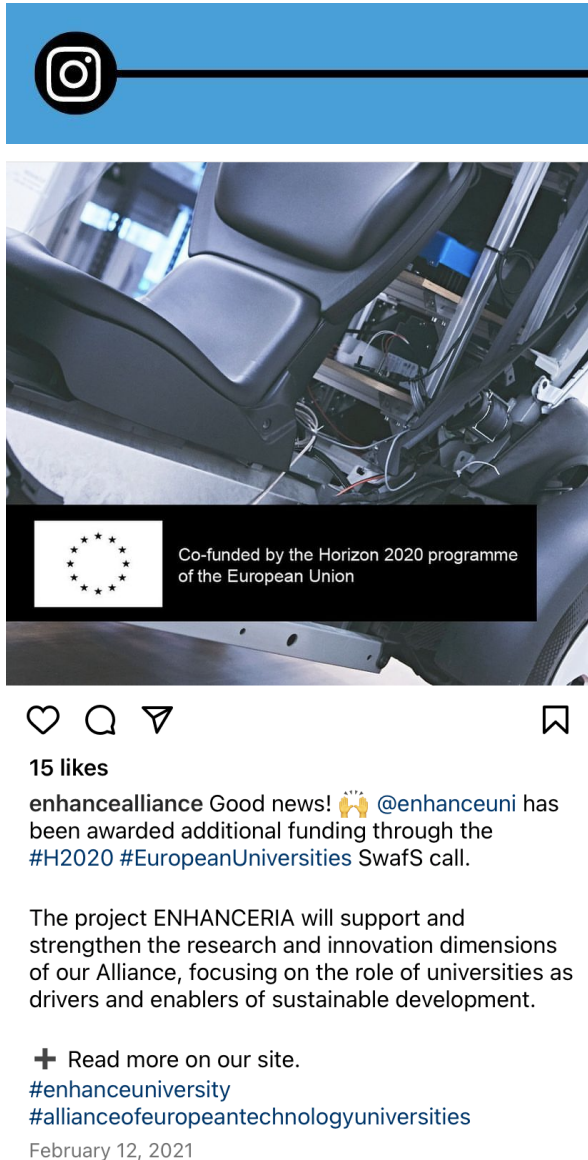This post is from January 13th, 2023. In this post you can find a good quality picture along with a piece of text to accompany it. In this post the main objective is to announce that there is a "A NEW TRAINING OFFER, THE "WINTER SCHOOL OF ENHANCE ON GENDER AND DIVERSITY IN SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND SOCIETY". The image does a good job of showing gender and diversity but with the long text, it kind of loses the audience member to engage and continue reading so much. This post is supposed to be a call to action and it

Same post more information

Same post more information continues

Same post with the remainder of information.
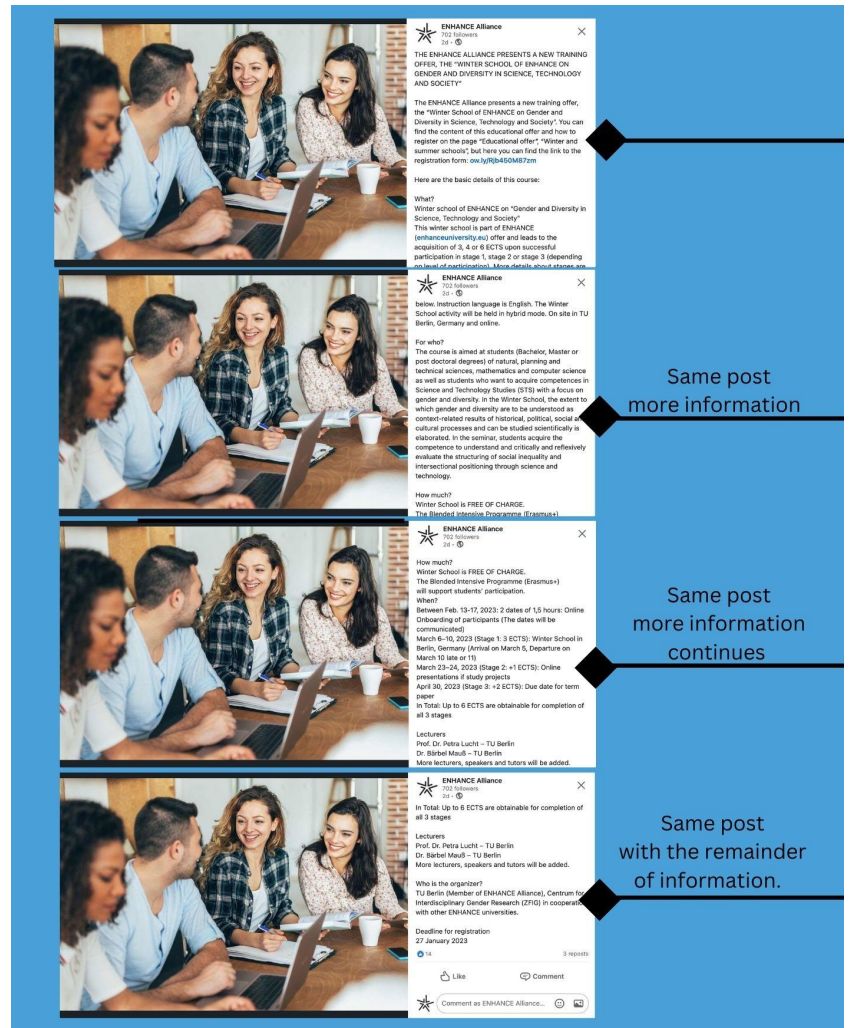
quite actually draws the reader away. Although the information is all vital and valuable, the main goal is to grab the reader's attention and peak its interest. Peaking interest can then direct the reader to the main website page or location of the registration. That is when that website page should provide the reader with all the important information the reader may need to register. This post at first glance does not necessarily give you an idea of what the message actually is, this can cause confusion and less success in taking action. LinkedIn is dedicated to reaching stakeholders, researchers, professors, and those well established. It is prominent that these posts are not quite attractive for either of the target groups that specific social media platforms are targeting. Their Instagram account should show more call to action posts and aesthetically appealing content to draw students to want to learn more about the alliance. Their LinkedIn posts do not necessarily draw your

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attention or stand out from other posts on the feed and their publications are spaced out in time which also can damage the loss of interest to their current followers.

3.2.2. Instagram

enhancealliance Good news! 🙌 @enhanceuni has been awarded additional funding through the #H2020 #EuropeanUniversities SwafS call.

The project ENHANCERIA will support and strengthen the research and innovation dimensions of our Alliance, focusing on the role of universities as drivers and enablers of sustainable development.

➕ Read more on our site.
#enhanceuniversity
#allianceofeuropeantechnologyuniversities

February 12, 2021

This Instagram post is one of their most older posts dating back to February 21, 2022. Instagram is one of their key platforms for reaching out to their primary targets, university students. Instagram is typically a platform that is continuously innovating and evolving. This is important because as you can see in this Instagram post the image is angled which can complicate identifying what the image is. The black banner with the EU flag can be looked at more like a news report rather than what the topic of the post is. Once reading the caption you have a better idea of the post but does lack engagement.

This is the overview of the alliance's Instagram grid [1] and as you can see it is filled with mostly the alliance colors and mostly with a black background. This sleek look is not a bad look but it doesn't necessarily bring much appeal for university students. The dark posts can bring misjudgment of the actual brand image of the alliance. Their brand image should be more engaging and could be more vibrant for their audiences attention. Most of their past posts have been more focused on their color schemes and including an excess amount of text and also more text in the caption. The key on Instagram is to draw attention and find a way to stand out on the feed. It can be a difficult task to accomplish when the brand you are posting about is not fully defined in its brand image or when the social media creator is unfamiliar with the platform and unfamiliar with the brand goals.

_____
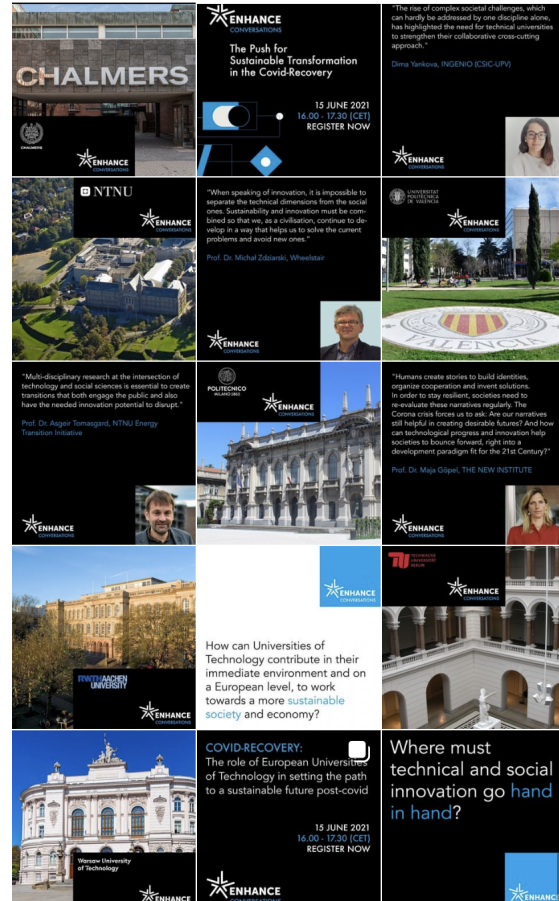
[1] Instagram Grids are what users see when they visit an Instagram account's profile. Instagram's Grid View has often been compared to a magazine – a colorful summary of a brand's identity. A quick scroll gives the user a sense of what the brand is all about and what kind of content they'll see if they follow the account.

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enhancealliance

Liked by **comtransmedia** and **32 others**

enhancealliance Last year of my degree, there was the biggest cooperation moment between classmates. Our innovation? Simply: to set up the notes to pass final exams. Through a WordDoc on Drive, we note every topic or question relative to the subject. Then, every one of us answered the topic/s, which dominates. Of course, there were complex questions that we got to respond to in a great way through dialogue and debate.

Liked by **comtransmedia** and **32 others**

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As a result, when the exam came, every student had access to an online document with all the notes. In addition, debate relative to the questions helped us solve even more doubts and improve our critical thinking."
❓ Have you had an experience of co-creating? If so, comment down below your experience!

#enhanceuniversity #enhancealliance
View all 55 comments
October 8, 2021

As a former intern in 2021/2022, this is one of the first Instagram graphics I made for the alliance. There is a great difference from the previous posts demonstrated especially in the image. This image is visually more appealing with the bright brand colors and the images in the frames. The logo is present below in a smaller size to not be too overwhelming. The brand colors are already vibrant pigments and if minimally used, the image can draw attention. Focusing their main blue brand color around the outer edge of the image also helps highlight the post when scrolling. Considering that the caption of the post is lengthy, with only two hashtags they had 55 comments and that can represent the positive amount of engagement and reaction of the post. Having only been with the alliance for a month, it was slightly difficult to create a publication that seemed newer and innovative from their previous posts. What made the creative process difficult was still being unfamiliar with the entity of the brand and their overall mission. The bigger challenge in scope of things was the fact that the alliance was too recovering from the COVID-19 crisis

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and having to rebuild their brand and image. This time of the publication was when myself and a few others were brought onto the project to really gather all the pieces and begin the reconstruction of the internal and external communication. As the team began to formalize and have one common goal in each department, the creative process began to be easier and clearer.
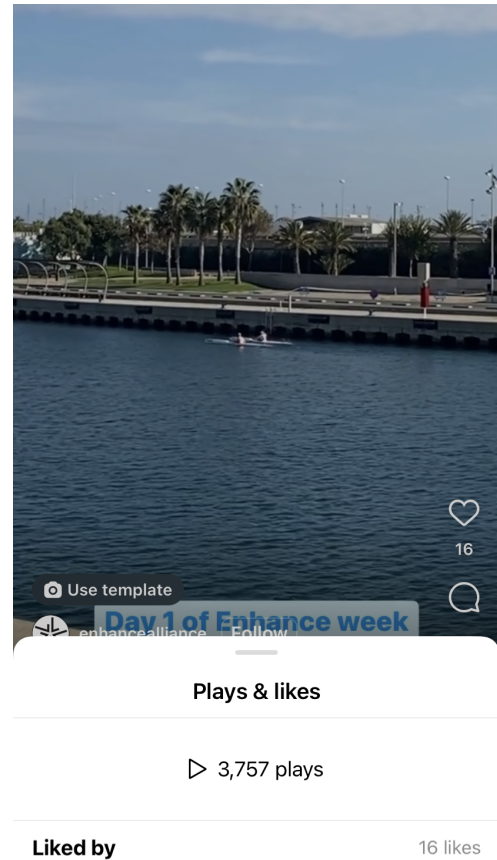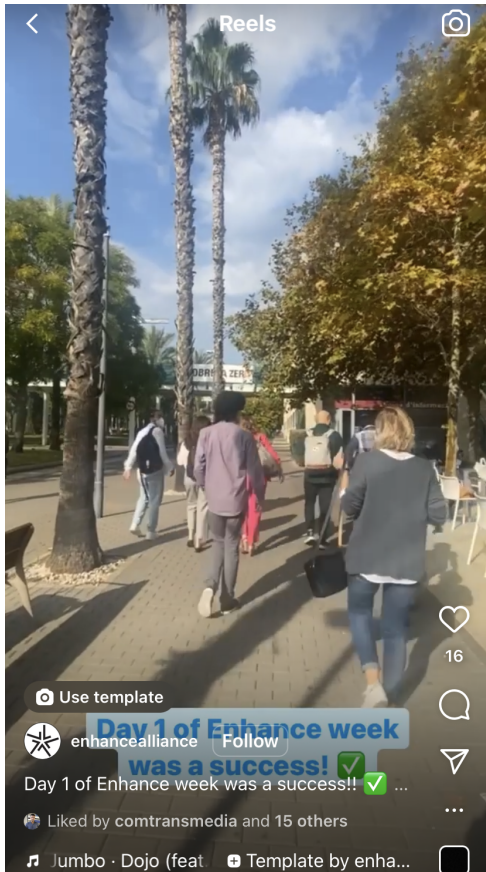
Here is an example of one of the first reels[2] published on the ENHANCE Alliance instagram feed.[3] It is a short 45 second video giving the point of view of a student attending one of the first in-person meetings for the alliance post COVID-19. This event was held in Valencia, Spain at the Universitat Politécnica de Valencia (UPV)

[2] Instagram Reels are an alternative to TikTok and other micro-video sharing services. Reels started as fifteen-second videos but have since expanded its features to include a ninety-second video length. The app gives users high-end video editing tools and the ability to share their video with the world without needing a high-end computer.

[3] Instagram Feed is a place where you can share and connect with the people and things you care about. When you open Instagram or refresh your feed, the photos and videos we think you care about most will appear towards the top of your feed. In addition to seeing content from people and hashtags you follow, you may also see suggested accounts that are relevant to your interests.

which is one of the seven universities involved in the ENHANCE Alliance project. This was the moment for the project to really gather together and begin unfolding all the work they have done, want to accomplish and a taste of what works and what doesn't. The main goal with this event on the alliance's social media platforms was to engage and spread brand messages. Creating an Instagram reel was one of the new methods we used to broadcast what a typical day at the event was like as a student. This consisted of recording 3-5 second clips of:

- The campus buildings
- the landscape of palm trees
- The auditoriums and classrooms
- Culture such as food
- Activities that occurred that day
- The interactions of the alliance

With these points it was simple to create a reel and really give a great behind the scenes of any future events and what the alliance has to offer. This publication was viewed and played over 3.500 times which indicates a great reach. This reels process was a goal to continue throughout the days of the event which helped to have more content for the Instagram account but also something new for their current audience to see of the alliance.

3.2.3. Twitter

Twitter is one of the platforms that is good at reaching another part of their main target audience and this can be university students and stakeholders. Twitter can be used to talk about and interact about the different topics ENHANCE Alliance holds valuable for their image. It is a platform that is always circling with many kinds of topics and an interesting platform to be able to not only publish a simple tweet but also a way to publish about an article/video or etc. and direct the users to where those articles/videos are published, that can be a form of engagement.

ENHANCE Alliance @ENHANCEAlliance · Jun 3, 2021

Join us for the #ENHANCEConversations and discuss which support social entrepreneurs, scholars and universities require, to become economically and ecologically sustainable!

15 June 2021, 16.00 - 17:30 CET, online.

Register now: bit.ly/3wlQ8UH

How can Universities of Technology contribute in their immediate environment and on a European level, to work towards a more sustainable society and economy?

NTNU and 7 others

As shown in the image above you can see an example of one of the alliance's earlier posts on their account. The post has a very low amount of engagement with only 3 likes. This post is promoting a kind of talk that requires registration to access the talk. If it is wanting to gain more participants the post could have been steered more towards an image with the topic of the talk to gain interest to the audience that is scrolling through their feed. The white image and the text can be less appealing and can lose interest in the audience and refrain them from reading so much text, especially if the brand logo/image is not yet recognizable.

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As shown in their most recent January 19, 2023 post, it is a promotion of a conference which includes images of possibly the past conferences and also links to direct the user to the registration platform. Although this post is visually better than the previous tweet, it has less engagement with only one like with zero comments and retweets. If Twitter is used correctly it can be a key platform for distributing an extension of their messages from LinkedIn and Instagram.

4. The Transmedia Communication Plan for ENHANCE Alliance

4.1. What is a transmedia communication plan?

Creating transmedia storytelling is a way to improve dialogic communication in corporate communication and to influence the corporate culture in a participatory structure. (2) Understanding the narrative ENHANCE Alliance internally will lead to a cohesive Transmedia communication plan to narrate to their audience. The overall success of a marketing or communications campaign is due to having a communication plan (Indeed, 2021). There are several reasons why (Indeed, 2021):
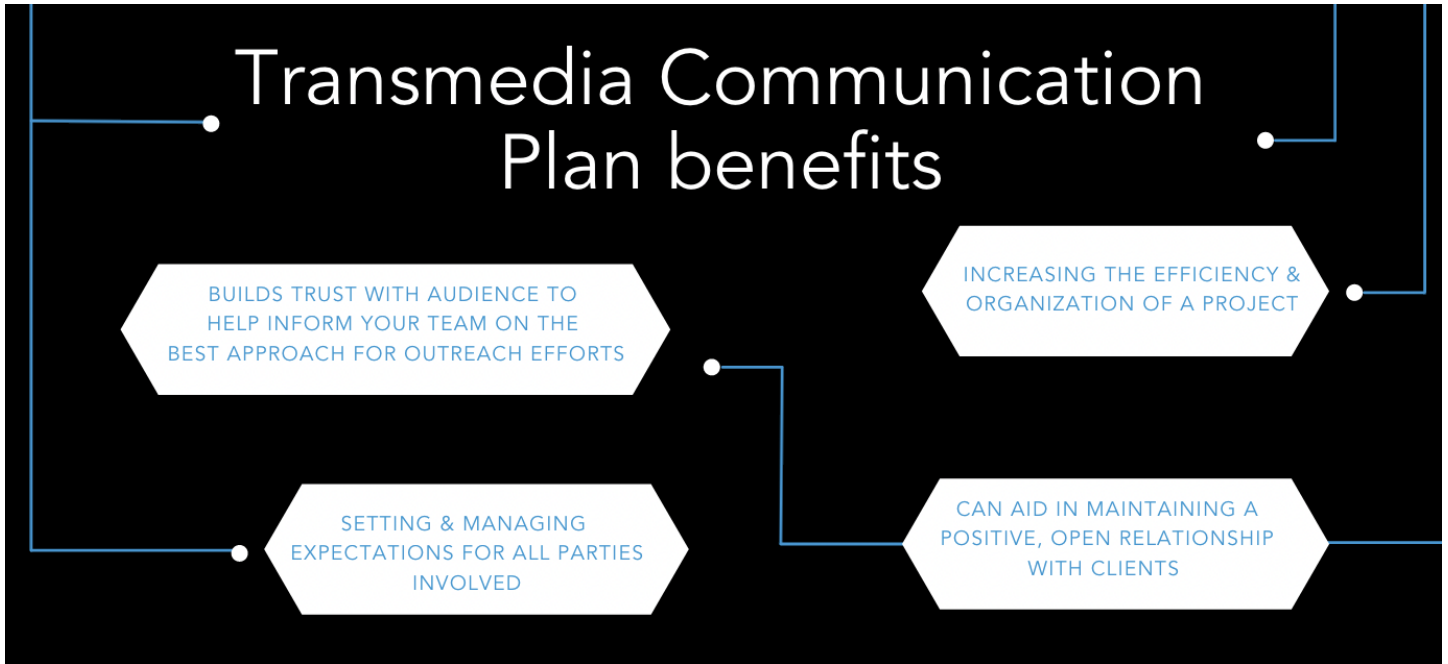
Created by the author, 2022.

ENHANCE Alliance has been actively working to create a workflow internally to be able to produce more content on their social media to increase engagement. According to *Indeed, 2021* article 'What is communication planning?', you should use a communication plan for reasons like launching a new product or service, starting a project, initiating large-scale company changes, implementing new policies and procedures, and client outreach. At this stage of the alliance, their main reason would be implementing new policies and procedures since there has been some internal growth since the beginning of the project.

Understanding the current workflow of the alliance is key to see the function of their internal strategy and its effectiveness. The graphic below represents a summary of the current internal workflow. There are generally 5 steps to go through when needing to publish something with the ENHANCE Alliance image or on their social media platforms. The first line of contact is the Communications team, this allows them to have first hands on the news to guide the dissemination throughout the social media platforms. ENHANCE Alliance's current internal workflow:

5 Steps	Description	To Do
Communications Team ↓ Secretary General ↓ Core Officers/WP Leaders ↓ Press Office ↓ Communications Team	Press release in English and audiovisual content (photos, videos if necessary). Press release in English approved. Two weeks before the dissemination.	-Coordination, plan & approval of the actions responsible. ↓ -Review -Coordination with Press Office of each university. -Translations -Statements & photo from their university. -Send translations & statements in English to Comms Team. ↓ -Dissemination to media & social networks. ↓ -Dissemination to all channels -Impact analysis

Created by the author, 2022.

To understand clearly what a communication plan is, it's the road map for getting your message delivered to your audience effectively (Dianova, 2017). According to Dianova's article it's an essential tool for ensuring your organization sends a clear, specific message with measurable results. These are the six steps that Dianova shares that can help create an effective communication plan for a business (Dianova, 2017).

1. Communications Audit
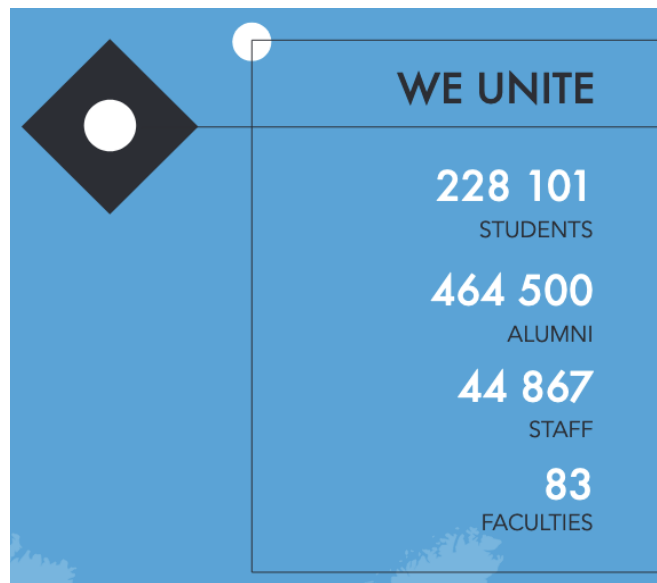
ENHANCE Alliance at a glance graphic

From this graphic you can see the size of the alliance including some of their main targets to reach. To successfully move forward with this transmedia communication plan, it's important to fully understand your company's or team's communication capabilities, as well as learn about previous strategies and if they were successful. (I need info about the way things were ran when project started)

Performing an audit to evaluate where the alliance currently stands in terms of communications is the first step in the process (Dianova, 2017). Gathering and analyzing all relevant information within the alliance is necessary to get a macroscopic view of the overall function of the alliance. Dianova includes a way to effectively conduct a communications audit that can be used in the alliance:

Created by author, 2022.

- Meeting with the communications or marketing department to discuss past and future strategies- Currently the ENHANCE Alliance holds a weekly meeting with the communications department to strategies the upcoming events, posts, and news to stay organized throughout the week and establish roles to each person in the team.

- Creating focus groups to dedicate time to communication efforts- Focus groups or online polls can be held on two platforms targeting students mainly and stakeholders. Asking general questions to the public about what they want from the alliance can help create a better relationship with the audience as well as identifying what works or not.

- Discussing communication strategies with other departments in your company- Holding monthly meetings at the end of the month with all members working in the alliance from all work packages. This opens up a space for every work package to express in 5 minutes what they need and what can be done better. Having a time frame such as this allows every internal member to introduce new ideas whether regarding their work package or in general of the alliance. Allowing this space and taking notes of each meeting has become a great way to benchmark the work that needs to be done and that has been completed as well.

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2. Clear goals and objectives

After completing a brief communications audit, consider the results the alliance would like to achieve through the transmedia communication plan. The goals and objectives should make the construction of messages simpler to produce. Using the S.M.A.R.T guide can also produce the alliance's goals and objectives. S.M.A.R.T is an acronym that means Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-Bound created by George T. Doran (Haughey, 2014).

> "'How do you write meaningful objectives?'- that is, frame a statement of results to be achieved, Managers are confused by all the verbal from seminars, books, magazines, consultants, and so on. Let me suggest therefore, that when it comes to writing effective objectives, corporate officers, managers, and supervisors just have to think of the acronym SMART. Ideally speaking, each corporate, department and section objective should be: (SMART)."
> *-George T. Doran*

These methods can facilitate the goals and objective process. For ENHANCE Alliance they have been able to produce these key goals for the alliance:

Graphic created by author, 2022.

Having clear goals of what ENHANCE Alliance is wanting to reach is an important factor because it helps with the internal communication. Establishing specific goals enables the team to clearly define the expectations for the project (Ause, 2022). The more precise you are, the more effective your transmedia communications plan will be (Ause, 2022). Specifying your intended end results will also ensure that all team members are on the same page (Ause, 2022). These goals of the alliance can guide the communication team on how and who to reach when publishing on ENHANCE Alliance's social media platforms.
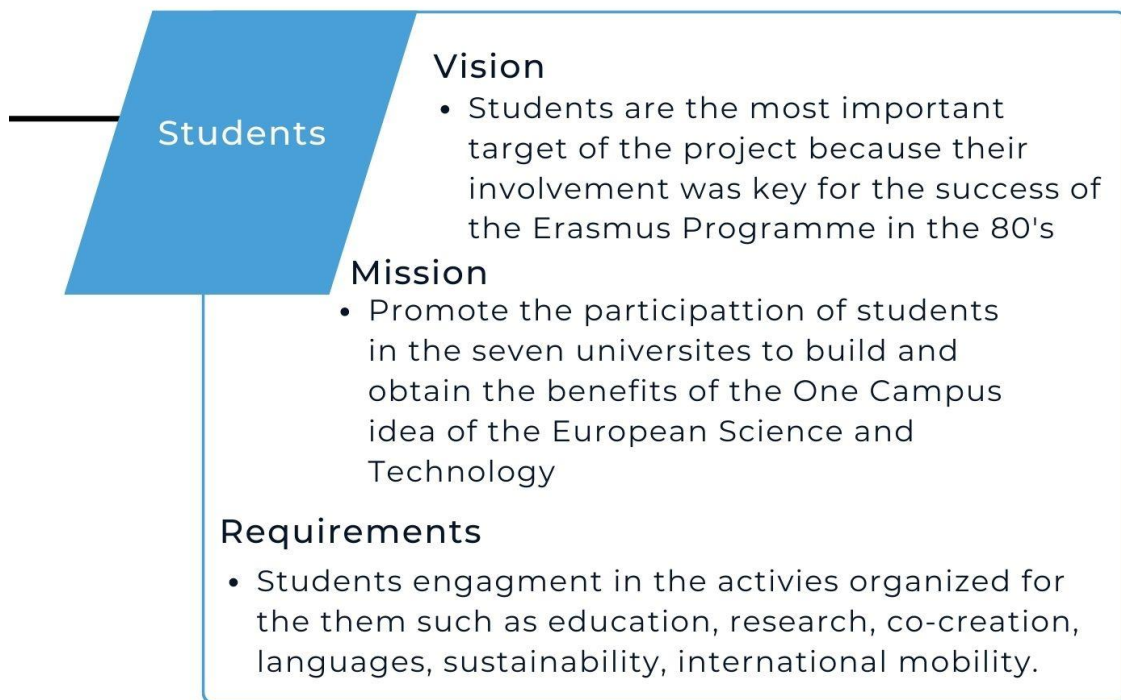
3. Identify your key audience

Recognizing the defined goals the alliance is trying to attain, this begins the process of identifying the target audience. The target audience of ENHANCE Alliance's transmedia communication plan can drastically alter the content, method and tone

of information, making it important to fully understand who will receive the communication (Indeed, 2022). The current target audience for the alliance are:

- EU Students
- Stakeholders
- Decision Makers
- Educational Community
- Scientific Investigators
- Partners
- Media

Each of these target audiences have a vision, mission and requirements in order to be successful.

Students

Vision
- Students are the most important target of the project because their involvement was key for the success of the Erasmus Programme in the 80's

Mission
- Promote the participattion of students in the seven universites to build and obtain the benefits of the One Campus idea of the European Science and Technology

Requirements
- Students engagment in the activies organized for the them such as education, research, co-creation, languages, sustainability, international mobility.

Decision Makers

Vision

- Decision makers especially policy makers were key for the success of the Erasmus program in the 80's.

Mission

- Motivate and inspire them by showing the current improvemnets and the opportunites that the alliance brings to them.

Requirements

- ENHANCE alliance needs the decision makers to take in all these priorites and transform them into reality. This type of support is necessary for any future events for the alliance.

Educational Community

Vision

- The PhD students are the future workforce of the alliance.
- The involvement of the educational community is a critical point for the success of the projects.

Mission

- Providing skills and information to exchange international experiences to improve their professional life and promotion.
- Fostering excellence science connected digitalisation, sustainability and inclusiveness.

Requirements

- Engagement of the most active staff- administrative, lectures and researchers with all the main objectives: digitalization, sustainability, diversity and gender equality.
- Ensuring a commitment to improve excellence and international mobility through participation.

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Vision

- Identify strategic partners and trust with them through the involvement in the big events that they are supporting.

Mission

- Increment the attention about the main topics of ENHANCE alliance showing the benefits for them.

Requirements

- Partners should provide the key skills that industry needs from academia for increasing competitiveness.
- Partners should support the alliance with funding, internships, etc.

Partners

Media

Vision

- Media is a strategic target of ENHANCE to empower society

Mission

- Analyzing the media ecosystem of every region and country of the Alliance, also to European level to identify the main media that can pay attention to the alliance priorities and build trust with them
- Promoting co-creation processes and dialogues with different media models-local, national, public or private corporations, broadcasting, editing, etc.

Requirements

- Media should spread the message that sustainable innovation is the common language of Europe in all the different languages of the alliance.

4. Determine how to deliver your message

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The delivery method should be accessible and convenient for the target audience while allowing the inclusion of all necessary information (Indeed, 2022). The best way to reach each target audience is through the transmedia method. Utilizing the current social media platforms the alliance has such as Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube, and Facebook there is a wide range of reaching each target. Having these outlets allows the communication team to use one news story and disseminate it through each realm by manipulating it a little to cater to each outlet. For instance, Instagram is the platform used to reach mostly EU students, knowing also where each target is on social media can allow the creative team to create a story or post that is attractive to a student to create some kind of engagement.

5. Review goals and milestones

Most importantly measuring the alliance's results to evaluate whether the objectives set out were achieved can help in the next occurring plan or strategy (Dianova, 2017). The evaluations might be take the form of the following (Dianova, 2017):

- Annual reports.
- Monthly reports.
- Progress reports.
- Reports from other departments.

A transmedia communication plan is your main tool for successfully delivering messages to the alliance key audiences in order to develop your mutually beneficial relationships. Developing this plan will help achieve ENHANCE Alliance's objectives and maximize their overall engagement.

Communication Plan

Once the alliance's mission, target audience, and common goals are established, this allows the internal workforce to diffuse in their department to communicate it externally. The communication department began to take some action by first off creating a general formula for publications on any ENHANCE alliance social media platform.

This formula was its first step to taking on a small internal challenge for each department by creating and posting one form of media on one of the social media platforms. This was useful because it helped for everyone in the alliance to co-create as a team. Disseminating this step by step graphic to each department also helped form concrete publications across all of ENHANCE alliance's platforms to strengthen its brand image.

Instagram

The main target audience of the alliance can be found on Instagram meaning this platform should be one of the most active and engaging for the alliance. The publications of this account should be consistent by posting up to 4-5 times per week. Mixing their publications from posts, reels, and stories of student life,

ENHANCE alliance's goals, upcoming events, and all updates of the alliance. Having interns from different universities to give input can really help dive into the mind of their main targets to better reach them. Following the formula above when posting these publications can help organize and plan future posts. Experimenting with different trends in society and finding those that can be incorporated to showcase the alliance's message can be a form of engaging with their audience. The images and videos posted on this platform should be high-quality and do not have to include the logo on every single image.

Twitter

The publications for the platform are great for news sharing and to link articles. At least 5-7 tweets can be published with information of any upcoming events linking the registration website, creating open forums for all to participate in a thread conversation about the topics that ENHANCE alliance are wanting to engage. The tweets that include links to articles of certain issues or work of members of the alliance can gain better understanding of the people who are in the alliance. Utilizing hashtags that are trending is important as well to grow visibility of each tweet and also engagement. Having one particular person on the communication team to be at any event of ENHANCE alliance can be useful because they can create an on the scene live twitter feed of the things that are occurring at these events. Upon having a press release, it should be published on this platform with an image or graphic of what the general idea of the press release is and a link to the full article.

LinkedIn

This is where most stakeholders,decision makers and educational community will be found therefore these publications need to be constructed for this type of audience. Publications should be done 3-4 times a week with a mixture of images, articles, events and videos. The main goal is to reach out to these decision makers to showcase what ENHANCE alliance is doing and is going to do. Peaking their interest in these publications is important for the future of the alliance. This is a

great platform to diffuse videos of any past events and the impact ENHANCE alliance is having in their universities and community.

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4.2. Conclusion

Overall, the ENHANCE Alliance has been able to reach this far with their current communication plan. With the minor internal tweaks and having consistency in all the departments and most importantly in the communication department, this project can flourish and accomplish greater goals. Incorporating the ENHANCE vision into this Transmedia Communication plan is the way each post, publication, news article, webinar, events, etc. should be carried out.

How can my brand image transform into an image well-known and with engagement from my main target audience? What is most important is creating a strong internal communication plan that can be present through any personnel changes. The key to creating a strong internal communication plan can lead to different avenues for ENHANCE Alliance and their image. Having a clear image of the alliance's goals, values and corporate culture can be the start for the plan. Sharing these goals and values not only through their social media but internally can create a strong team with people who strive to reach the common alliance goal.

As of now ENHANCE Alliance has already gone under some changes for their brand image such as redefining how they want their corporate image to be viewed as having now their brand colors, fonts, press, and a step closer to really amplifying their engagement. Upon having these key elements conquered and clear internally, the alliance can now begin their transmedia communication plan and take action. To be able to disseminate great valuable and engaging content on multiple platforms having the goals and values clear makes the dissemination an easier task. Consistently posting on all their platforms and having different forms of interactions within the platform can be done fun and uniquely with the right communication team. Again this goes back to the internal communication and distribution and although their communication team now are mostly university students they can use this as a vessel to really dive into strategies that can be executed to reach for example their friends, and people in their age group.

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Incorporating different modalities to gain access to ENHANCE Alliance's overall brand message goes hand in hand with some topics they value and that is creating a way to reach their audiences either with in-person conferences or virtually. The platform that ENHANCE could steer towards could be Spotify. Creating podcasts that are about the topics they want to educate others about and what the alliance's goals can be done in many podcasts with the incorporation of all their target groups. Having weekly episodes and having weekly guests in different age groups and also diverse educational backgrounds can create a bond with a wide variety of users. Spotify is easily accessible as well as can be a way to diffuse more information about certain topics that a simple Instagram post or tweet can't fully capture.

In the transmedia world, content and brands are always evolving and pushing you to always innovate and create unique and engaging content. Identifying the core of ENHANCE Alliance's main goals and values along with their failures or honesty of how their current transmedia and communication plan is going can lead you to improvement. It can be a matter of trial and error and from the point that Enhance Alliances was created and the global pandemic that forced many companies and brands to pause, it was a learning point for the alliance to be able to clearly identify its core values and evolve. The current state of the alliance is recuperating from this big change in our environment and is now at a point of truly growing and becoming a pillar for our future and of many generations to come.

Incorporating the experience from the classroom, such as working in teams, creating a workflow, delivering presentations, and most importantly working with a local rock climbing organization to help them improve their brand image have allowed me to practice all these exercises outside of the classroom with ENHANCE Alliance. Each of these assignments were the stepping stones to be able to deliver the Transmedia communication plan for a project with a mission. If the mission is clear, anything can be accomplished.

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