

Developing a  
Digital Media Campaign:  
Components and Guidelines

CMD 315  
Spring 2018

# **Components of Digital Media Campaign Assignment**

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## Section A: Proposal

Your proposal is due in class on **February 1**. You should hand in a one-page summary of your projected choices for feedback.

The summary should specify:

- The topic (the topic can come from any field, for example pro-social, commercial, political, self/brand advancement, etc.)
- The main points/themes
- The primary (and secondary) audience
- The campaign goals
- The sources (initially) that will be used/consulted
- How information will be gathered and stored

## Section B: Campaign Goals & Audience Analysis (Part I)

This part constitutes the first several pages of your final project. You cannot begin the message design portion of your campaign without a complete and thorough goal and audience analysis. This part should be based on the proposal you submitted and should be responsive to the feedback you received on it. Resources are available to help you and will be reviewed in class.

### • Goal Analysis and Goal Setting

#### **What are the goals of the campaign? What will it try to achieve?**

Using library and internet research as well as scholarly and newsworthy sources, become knowledgeable about the campaign topic and goals. Use citations carefully and liberally.

- What are different aspects of the topic?
- What do experts or others with experience on this topic say about it?
- What are arguments and evidence for your campaign?
- What resistance or obstacles do you anticipate?

Some issues to keep in mind when defining the problem:

1. Some problems require collective solutions and some require individual solutions. Most campaigns in politics are aimed at changing or reinforcing individual votes; commercial campaigns are aimed at product change or reinforcement of loyalties. Individual benefit and cost is often the focus of these campaigns though they may also be modified by appeals to collective benefit. For example, buying products which may be a bit more costly but are environmentally more sound or appealing to voters hoping they will send a message to DC. Collective vs. individual problems create different appeal strategies.
2. What you define as a problem may be defined as a non-problem by others or as an infringement on freedoms. What moral, social, or economic reasons support defining the issue you raise as a problem that should be solved? For example, helmet laws; smoke-free restaurants; condom information in schools. Why should your issue be viewed as a problem in need of alleviation? Can you redefine the problem or refocus it to avoid confrontation with opposing positions?

### • Audience (Interactors) Analysis

The Audience influences the topic, tone, complexity and presentation of all materials in your campaign (see p.20 of the Carroll book).

#### **Who is the audience? Why this audience? Why this goal with this audience?**

- How old?
- Gender?

- Education/ knowledge on topic?
- Where located? (Not just geographically, but what are their media use habits?)  
You need to research the media habits of your target audience in detail.
- Cultural background and how that relates to your campaign goals
- Access/ resources
- How do they feel about topic? Neutral? Oppositional? Supportive? What are their beliefs and values? Are you seeking to change attitudes/behaviors, reinforce, reframe, or shape attitudes/behavior?
- Likely problems or difficulties (reach, attention, resistance)

Sources of information on these questions can be found in existing research, in public opinion data and in demographic data. Sometimes you will not be able to get direct data on attitudes and beliefs, but you will be able to get demographic information describing your target audience (e.g. as young, educated, from high SES families, and female). These descriptions will allow you to draw some inferences about the audience.

## **Part I Write-Up**

Your paper should be typed, double-spaced, 12-point font, normal 1” margins. The typical length is about 5 pages. The quality of the final paper will depend in large part on the quality of justifications/explanations for the goals, target audience, sources and message choices in the final paper.

The messages you will describe in your final paper must be linked to the audience characteristics presented in this paper. Therefore, part of your task in this paper is to set the stage for the final messages. You are being asked to hand in this first part to keep you on track and so that you can receive feedback to use in revising this section in the final paper.

The write-up of Part I (first draft) is due in class on **March 5.**

## Section C: Message Theory and Design (Part II)

### • Message Strategizing and Theorizing

The messages you choose to create to achieve the goals of your campaign are constrained by two things: 1) the goals of your campaign, and 2) the characteristics of your target audience. These two factors determine, in part, the quality and style of the messages you use. The style must be appropriate to the audience. The specific arguments and evidence come from your research of the topic and goals and the characteristics of your target audience.

### • Message Creation

You will create messages for your campaign in the following ways (and according to our class schedule as listed on your syllabus):

- on your WordPress site – by creating the space there for your campaign
- through your **3 blog posts** on your WordPress site
- on social media through Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn

All of the communication and messages in these different spaces through different digital media should work together in your overall campaign. In this section of the paper, you need to explain how and why you've made the choices to create particular messages in these spaces for your particular campaign goals and for your particular audience(s). You can provide links to the actual messages, or if they are not yet all created, you can describe the exact text and/or visual look of the message as it will appear.

What is the persona you have created across these spaces for your campaign? How are you maintaining consistency from one space to another? (What are the identifying attributes of your campaign that carry over from one medium to the others? For example, branding, logos, slogans, fonts, colors, etc.) Are you using video, audio, photographs, infographics, etc. and why or why not?

**Part II Write-Up** (first draft) is due in class on **April 5**.

Your paper should be typed, double-spaced, 12-point font, normal 1” margins. The typical length is about 5 pages. The quality of the final paper will depend in large part on the quality of justifications/explanations for the goals, target audience, sources and message choices in the final paper. You are being asked to hand in this first part to keep you on track and so that you can receive feedback to use in revising this section in the final paper.

## Section D: Analytics, Testing and Revisions (Part III)

### • Analytics

This section is where you will describe and analyze any and all of the data available for your messages. For example, how many: Twitter followers, tweets, retweets; Facebook likes, comments; LinkedIn connections and messages; Blog site user comments, page views, visitors.

### • Testing and Message Revisions

#### | Testing & Re-creation: Interviews about Your Persuasive Message

One step in establishing the soundness of your persuasive message is to test it on a group of people who are a part of your target audience (or as close to the target audience as you can get). Before committing to your final persuasive message, create a draft version of your message and present it to at least four people from your target audience. The interviews are best conducted face-to-face but if a particularly appropriate interviewee can only be interviewed by phone, make sure you get your message into their hands so they can read and react to it. Include the telephone numbers of the people interviewed (with their permission) so that interviews can be spot-checked as necessary.

The goals of these interviews with members of the target audience are (1) to get information about the arguments that they themselves might use, (2) to get reactions to the messages you propose to use, and (3) to modify your persuasive message according to the interviewee's reactions to your message and their own persuasive arguments. Do not make the error of assuming that the audience's arguments are necessarily better, stronger, or more subtle than your own. Rather use their reactions to modify and adjust your message.

What about the content of the interviews? You can carry out the interviews in any way that you wish, using whatever questions you think would most help you evaluate your persuasive message. However, you must complete two aspects of the interviews: (1) question the interviewee about his or her reasons and arguments in response to yours; and (2) ask the interviewee for his or her evaluations of a draft version of your message. You may also want to find out about their attitudes and opinion on the issue as well as how informed they are, how relevant the issue is to them, and so on. Do not ignore issues of style or presentation especially for story boards.

The protocol you use should be appropriate for your message. The "protocol" refers to the sequence of questions you ask to get information from those interviewed.

The second part of the interview would present the interviewee with your message and/or parts of your argument seeking their reactions to and judgments about the message. These reactions can include

whether they found the message persuasive, or whether they found certain arguments (or evidence) especially strong, new, or important. You may also want to ask them what thoughts went through their minds (aka cognitive response analysis) when they read your message. The specific questions in this section are up to you but they must be focused on your message (or specific arguments from your message).

The results from the interviews will be incorporated in your final paper. You must include your written notes (some have reported actual transcripts) from each interview as an appendix to the final paper. Each interview should describe the interviewee and how he or she fits the target population (or is close to the target population). Here demographic information and appropriate identifying information is necessary. Do not identify anyone by name.

One section of the final paper should be devoted to the interviews. This section should (1) describe the interview procedure including the questions asked, (2) present the key findings from the interviews relevant to your persuasive campaign, and (3) describe how your message (or specific arguments) changed as a result of what you learned from your interviewees.

### **Part III Write-Up** (first draft) is due in class on **April 19**.

Your paper should be typed, double-spaced, 12-point font, normal 1” margins. The typical length is about 5 pages. The quality of the final paper will depend in part on the testing and analysis of interactors’ use of your campaign spaces and messages, and any revisions you make to your final campaign based on the testing and analysis. You are being asked to hand in this first part to keep you on track and so that you can receive feedback to use in revising this section in the final paper.



## **Section E: Putting it All Together (Final Paper)**

The final paper should have eight parts:

- (1) Campaign goals and goals analysis;
- (2) Description of the Target Audience;
- (3) Research and strategy basis for Messages;
- (4) Description (and links or screen captures) of Final Messages and how they fit together and support overall campaign goals;
- (5) Discussion of campaign analytics;
- (6) Description of message testing and revisions;
- (7) Conclusions and implications;
- (8) References and Appendices with detailed notes or transcripts from interviews.

**The final campaign paper is due in class on May 3.** The paper should be typed, double-spaced, 12-point font, normal 1” margins. It should be approximately 15 pages. The final paper should reflect the revisions you’ve made to each section based on the feedback you received from your classmates and me. You must cite anyone else’s ideas that you employ in the paper. You may use any system of citation (APA, MLA, footnotes, endnotes, In-text citations and Reference list) but be consistent.

## **Section F: Implementation (Final Presentation)**

**Campaign presentations will take place on May 3 (regular class time) and May 7 (during our final exam time 3-5:30PM).**

Oral presentations are worth about 10% of your final grade. Practice your presentation! Be prepared to show and tell us about your campaign in an organized way. The final paper is also worth 10%. Together, they equal 20% of your final course grade.