

Glossary

Attitudes. An individual's predispositions toward an issue, person, or group, which influence his or her response to be positive or negative, favorable or unfavorable.

Baseline study. The collection and analysis of data regarding an intended audience or situation prior to intervention.

Bounceback card. A short questionnaire, often on a business-reply postcard, that is distributed with materials to collect process evaluation data.

Channel. The route of message delivery (e.g., mass media channels include television, radio, newspapers, magazines; interpersonal channels include health professional to patient; community channels include community events, such as health fairs or sporting events).

Chat rooms. Places on the Internet where users hold live typed conversations. The "chats" typically involve a general topic. To begin chatting, users need chat software, most of which can be downloaded from the Internet for free.

Closed-ended questions. Questions that provide respondents with a list of possible answers from which to choose; also called multiple choice, forced-choice, or fixed-choice questions.

Communication concepts. See message concepts.

Communication objectives. The specific outcomes you expect exposure to your communications will produce in support of the program's overall goal.

Communication strategy. A statement that describes:

- The intended audience members
- The settings, channels, and activities that should be used to reach them
- The image that program communications should convey
- The action intended audience members should take as a result of exposure to your communication
- A compelling benefit they will receive by taking the action
- Support that convinces them they will experience the benefit

Communication strategy statement. A written document containing the communication strategy, which may be supplemented with additional information such as background on the health problem, the goals the communication program is designed to help attain, or more thorough intended audience profiles. This document provides the direction and consistency for all program messages and materials.

Comprehension. A pretesting measure used to determine whether messages are clearly understood.

Consumer panel. A research study in which the buying behavior and other characteristics of a group of consumers are studied over time. Data can be collected through periodic questionnaires, consumer diaries, UPC scanners, or a combination of techniques. Because information is collected at multiple times, changes in behavior over time can be examined and panel members can be recontacted and asked additional questions that are specific to a particular health problem or communication effort. Consumer panel data are subject to the same limitations of any panel study (e.g., sample possibly being misrepresentative due to selection bias, difficulty in ensuring participation over time, and inability to control the drop-out rate).

Convenience samples. Samples that consist of respondents who are typical of the intended audience and who are easily accessible; results cannot be projected to the entire population being studied.

Creative brief. A short (one- to two-page) version of the communication strategy statement, used to guide development of materials and activities. The short creative brief is sometimes used in place of the longer communication strategy statement, especially if the program is not very complex.

Diagnostic information. The results of pretesting research that indicate the strengths and weaknesses in messages and materials.

Education entertainment. A form of health communication in which educational content and information is intentionally incorporated into an entertainment format (e.g., songs, comics, nonnews television or radio programming, movies).

Environmental factors. Factors that are external to an individual but can influence the individual's behavior (e.g., policies, access to services, geography, physical features such as sidewalks and parks).

Focus group. A qualitative research technique in which an experienced moderator guides about 8 to 10 participants through a discussion of a selected topic, allowing them to talk freely and spontaneously. Focus groups are often used to identify previously unknown issues or concerns or to explore reactions to potential actions, benefits, or concepts during the planning and development stages.

Formative evaluation. Evaluative research conducted during program development. May include state-of-the-art reviews, pretesting messages and materials, and pilot testing a program on a small scale before full implementation.

Frequency. The average number of times an audience is exposed to a specific media message.

Gatekeeper. An organization or individual you must work with before you can reach an intended audience (e.g., an organization, a schoolteacher, a television public service director).

Geodemographic databases. Customized computer programs that combine many variables—such as demographic, lifestyle, behavior, and geographic information—from different surveys into one analysis.

Goal. The overall health improvement an organization or agency strives to create.

Health belief model. A conceptual framework of health behavior stating that health behavior is a function of both knowledge and motivation. Specifically, the model emphasizes the role of perceived vulnerability to a condition, perceived severity of the condition, perceived benefits of the recommended action, perceived barriers to the advised action, cues to action, and self- efficacy in terms of one's ability to take action.

Impact evaluation. A type of research designed to identify whether and to what extent a program contributed to accomplishing its stated goals (here, more global than outcome evaluation).

In-depth interviews. A type of qualitative research in which a trained interviewer guides an individual through a discussion of a selected topic, allowing the person to talk freely and spontaneously. This technique is often used to identify previously unknown issues or concerns, or to explore reactions to potential actions, benefits, or concepts during the planning and development stages.

Intended audience. The audience selected for program messages and materials (see segmentation).The primary intended audience consists of those individuals the program is designed to affect. The secondary intended audience is the group (or groups) that can help reach or influence the primary audience.(intended audience is also referred to as “target audience.”)

Intended population. A broad definition of the audience for a program. The intended population is defined by the epidemiology of the problem and factors contributing to it (e.g., women ages 40 and over for a mammography screening program).

Internet.A global network connecting millions of computers all over the world, allowing for the exchange of information.

Intranet. Electronic information sources with limited access (e.g., Web sites available only to members of an organization or employees of a company). Intranets can be used to send an online newsletter with instant distribution or provide instant messages or links to sources of information within an organization.

Low literacy. A limited ability to use printed and written information to function in society, to achieve one's goals, and to develop one's knowledge and potential.

Mailing lists (listservs). E-mail–based discussions on a specific topic. All the subscribers to a list can elect to receive a copy of every message sent to the list, or they may receive a regular “digest” disseminated via e-mail.

Media advocacy. The strategic use of mass media to reframe issues, shape public discussion, or build support for a policy, point of view, or environmental change.

Media literacy. Having the skills to deconstruct media messages to identify the sponsor's motives and to construct or compose media messages representing the intended audience's point of view. This is often taught to youth so they can evaluate the media messages directed toward them.

Message concepts. Brief statements, sometimes accompanied by visuals, that present key aspects of the communication strategy (e.g., action to be taken, benefit promised in exchange, support for the benefit) to the intended audience. Message concepts often differ in terms of the type of appeal used; one may be factual, one may be emotional, and one may demonstrate the action to be taken.

Newsgroups. Collections of e-mail messages on related topics. The major difference between newsgroups and listservs is that the newsgroup host does not disseminate all the messages the host sends or receives to all subscribers. In addition, subscribers need special software to read the messages. Many Web browsers, such as Internet Explorer, contain this software. Some newsgroups are regulated (the messages are screened for appropriateness to the topic before they are posted).

Objectives. See communication objectives.

Omnibus survey. A national survey conducted by a research organization that includes questions on varied topics for various sponsoring organizations. This method of survey research allows multiple organizations to add questions to construct one questionnaire, reducing survey costs to participating organizations.

Open-ended questions. Questions that allow an individual to respond freely in his or her own words, in contrast to closed-ended or fixed-choice questions.

Outcome evaluation. Research designed to assess the extent to which a program achieved its objectives.

Over-recruiting. Recruiting more respondents than required to compensate for expected "no-shows."

Polysyllabic words. Words that contain three or more syllables.

Pretesting. A type of formative evaluation that involves systematically gathering intended audience reactions to messages and materials before the messages and materials are produced in final form.

Primary intended audience. See intended audience.

Probe. A technique used primarily in qualitative research (e.g., focus groups, in-depth interviews) to solicit additional information about a question or issue. Probes should be neutral (e.g., “What else can you tell me about _____?”), not directive (“Do you think the pamphlet was suggesting that you take a particular step, such as changing your diet?”).

Process evaluation. Research conducted to document and study the functioning of different components of program implementation; includes assessments of whether materials are being distributed to the right people and in what quantities, whether and to what extent program activities are occurring, and other measures of how and how well the program is working.

Program objectives. The specific outcomes that you expect your entire program to achieve. These will be broader than communication objectives, but must also specify outcomes.

PSA. A public service announcement; an advertisement that a mass media outlet (e.g., magazine, newspaper, radio station, television station, Web site, outdoor venue) prints or broadcasts without charging the sponsoring organization.

Public relations. Marketing activities designed to raise the public’s awareness about a product, service, individual, or issue; management of an organization’s public image that helps the public understand the organization and its products.

Qualitative research. Subjective research that involves obtaining reactions and impressions from small numbers of people by engaging them in discussions. The information gathered should not be described in numerical terms, and generalizations about the intended audience cannot be made. Qualitative research is useful for exploring reactions and uncovering additional ideas, issues, or concerns.

Quantitative research. Research designed to gather objective information by asking a large number of people identical (and predominantly closed-ended) questions. Results are expressed in numerical terms (e.g., 35 percent are aware of X and 65 percent are not), and, if the respondents are a representative random sample, quantitative data can be used to draw conclusions about the intended audience as a whole. Quantitative research is useful for measuring the extent to which knowledge, attitudes, or behaviors are prevalent in an intended audience.

Random sample. A sample of respondents selected from an intended population in which every member of the population had an equal chance of being included.

Reach. The number of people or households exposed to a specific media message during a specific period of time.

Readability testing. Using a formula to predict the approximate reading level (usually expressed in grades) a person must have achieved in order to understand written material.

Recall. In pretesting, a measure that describes the extent to which respondents remember seeing or hearing a message that was shown in a competitive media environment—usually centers on recall of the main idea, not the verbatim message.

Search engine. A mechanism for finding Web sites or documents contained on Web sites. To make sure others can find your site, you can register it with popular search engines (e.g., Google) by providing a description of your site and a few keywords.

Secondary intended audience. See intended audience.

Segmentation. Subdividing an overall population into homogeneous subsets in order to better describe and understand a group, predict behavior, and tailor messages and programs to match specific interests, needs, or other group characteristics. Segments may be demographic (e.g., age, sex, education, life cycle), geographic (e.g., coastal Cree, inland Cree), or psychographic (e.g., personality, lifestyle, usage patterns, risk factors, benefits sought), or they may be based on a combination of these factors.

Self-administered questionnaires. Questionnaires that are filled out by respondents themselves (rather than by an interviewer).

Settings. Times, places, and states of mind during which an intended audience is attentive and open to a message and finds it credible.

Social cognitive theory. A theory of human behavior that stresses the dynamic interrelationships among people, their behavior, and their environment. While the environment shapes, maintains, and constrains behavior, people are not passive in the process; they can create and change their environments. A basic premise of the theory is that people learn not only through their own experiences but also by observing the actions of others and the results of those actions. Social learning theory was the precursor to social cognitive theory.

Social marketing. The application and adaptation of commercial marketing concepts to the planning, development, implementation, and evaluation of programs that are designed to bring about behavior change to improve the welfare of individuals or their society. Social marketing emphasizes thorough market research to identify and understand the intended audience and what is preventing them from adopting a certain health behavior, and to then develop, monitor, and constantly adjust a program to stimulate appropriate behavior change. Social marketing programs can address any or all of the traditional marketing mix variables—product, price, place, or promotion.

Social network service. A social network service focuses on building online communities of people who share interests and activities, or who are interested in exploring the interests and activities of others. Most social network services are web based and provide a variety of ways for users to interact, such as e-mail and instant messaging services. Social networking has created powerful new ways to communicate and share information. Popular methods now combine many of these, with Bebo being the most widely used in Eeyou Istchee.

Stages-of-change model. A theoretical framework that explains behavior change as a process rather than as an event. The model identifies individuals at various stages of readiness to attempt, to make, and to sustain a behavior change. The stages are precontemplation, contemplation, decision/determination, action, and maintenance.

Strategy. The overall approaches a program takes.

Tailored communication. Messages crafted for and delivered to each individual based on individual needs, interests, and circumstances.

Target audience. See intended audience.

Twitter. A free social networking and micro-blogging service that allows its users to send and read other users' updates (otherwise known as tweets), which are text-based posts of up to 140 characters in length. Updates are displayed on the user's profile page and delivered to other users who have signed up to receive them. The sender can restrict delivery to those in his or her circle of friends (delivery to everyone being the default). Users can receive updates via the Twitter website, instant messaging, SMS, RSS, email or through an application such as Twittrific or Facebook.

Web site. Documents on the World Wide Web that provide information from an organization (or individual) and provide links to other sources of Internet information. Web sites give users access to text, graphics, sound, video, and databases. A Web site can consist of one Web page or thousands of Web pages. The Cree Health Board Website is located at: creehealth.org

World Wide Web. A part of the Internet designed to facilitate navigation of the network through graphic user interfaces and hypertext links.

Internet and Multimedia Channels

CD-ROMs and DVDs—Computer disks that can contain an enormous amount of information, including sound and video clips and interactive devices.