



Marketing Communication Strategy for the Southwark Pilot

OPTIMUM 2

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Final Report

**Lian Zhang and Dr Marcus Enoch
Loughborough University**

Lian Zhang and Dr Marcus Enoch
Department of Civil and Building
Engineering,
Loughborough University
Leicestershire LE11 3TU
United Kingdom.
Tel: +44 (0)1509 223408.
Fax: +44 (0)1509 223981.
Email: l.zhang@lboro.ac.uk.



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OPTIMUM2 Southwark Pilot Marketing Communication Strategy

Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to develop a marketing communication strategy for the Southwark Pilot of the OPTIMUM2 project. Specifically, the report draws on a state-of-the-art review to establish a suitable theoretical framework that can be employed by local and/or regional public authorities when designing, implementing and operating a marketing communication strategy for a specific project, and subsequently develops a suggested marketing communication strategy.

Overall, the report recommends that a six stage model based on social marketing theory be adopted as a framework to create a marketing communication strategy suitable for use by an OPTIMUM2 Pilot. These stages are:

- Set marketing communications objectives
- Specify target groups
- Design marketing communication techniques
- Set up schedule
- Specify budget
- Monitor process and evaluate outcomes

In particular, it notes that clear target groups should be identified and that they be served with well defined messages delivered through suitable and cost effective media channels. It adds that it is crucial that the process is comprehensively monitored so that a useful evaluation exercise may be undertaken and lessons learnt for similar future projects.

1 Introduction

1.1 OPTIMUM 2

OPTIMUM2 is a European Regional Development Fund Interreg IIIB programme which aims to provide an effective approach for using Mobility Management to tackle the accessibility and mobility problems caused by congestion in urban areas. Specifically, it draws on the results of OPTIMUM, a previous Interreg project, to define five key factors, or “pillars”, which sum up the most important issues needed within a Mobility Management approach, namely that:

1. The approach must be user-oriented;
2. Mobility Management measures must be introduced as early as possible with any new development (ideally at the planning stage of any new development);

3. Effective communication and information is vital if a Mobility Management measure is to succeed;
4. Effective marketing and promotion activities are also essential ingredients;
5. The final element concerns the enforcement of Mobility Management.

The central OPTIMUM2 proposition is that if the five pillars are addressed properly, then the Mobility Management approach will provide a useful contribution to preventing mobility, accessibility and environmental problems.

The London Borough of Southwark is one of eight partners involved in the project. Here the key objective is to encourage the take up of effective mobility management measures among local traffic generators (e.g. businesses, hospitals etc) through the planning system and thus reduce energy consumption. This is to be accomplished by:

1. Establishing Local Travel Plan Groups (LTPGs) within a local community framework - e.g. the current Community Council framework recently set up by Southwark Council and/or the network of local business groups – to more effectively deliver mobility management.
2. Developing the planning financial obligation tool (Section 106 of the 1990 Town and County Act) in relation to travel planning to link more closely with LTPGs to increase the transparency of the process to local people and ensure the spend is on appropriate mechanisms.
3. Developing and testing a range of innovative mobility management tools that can be delivered through the LTPG mechanism e.g. providing pool bicycles for businesses, conducting street audits of local areas, and running travel awareness raising events for businesses.
4. Developing and analysing possible methods of incorporating the LTPG regime into the local political, transport and planning framework through a brief review of existing planning practice in EU member and other relevant states.
5. Determining the barriers to implementing LTPGs and methods of overcoming these.

1.2 Aim and objectives

The aim of this report is to increase the awareness and inform the effectiveness of the OPTIMUM2 project in Southwark Borough among transport planning professionals, policy makers, and project funding providers as well as other interest groups through the development of a marketing communication strategy. Specifically, this report will:

- Select a suitable theoretical framework that could be employed by local and/or regional public authorities when designing, implementing and operating a marketing communication strategy;
- Develop a suitable marketing communication strategy for the Southwark Pilot of the OPTIMUM2 project based on the theoretical model.

1.3 Research method

This research is based on a state-of-the-art of the literature.

1.4 Structure of the report

The report is structured as follows:

Chapter 2 looks at marketing communication theory and sets out the tasks for a marketing communication strategy at the project level.

Chapter 3 sets out the marketing communication planning process.

Chapter 4 presents conclusions and recommendations.

2 Tasks of the OPTIMUM2 Marketing Communication Strategy

In this report, the purpose of the marketing communication strategy is to promote the results of the research undertaken through the Southwark Pilot OPTIMUM2 to the target groups. Fill (2002) defines the marketing communication as “*a management process through which an organisation enters into a dialogue with its various audiences*”. Based on the findings of Fill (2002) and social marketing theory reviewed in the report of *Marketing Mobility Management Tools in Southwark: Devising a Strategy* (Zhang et al., 2005). The Southwark Pilot therefore, needs to establish a dialogue with its target groups in order to achieve the following four tasks:

Differentiating: to show the target groups that the OPTIMUM2 project is different from other similar campaigns and it is more attractive and effective.

Reminding: to ensure that when options for sustainable transport policies and schemes are being assessed, OPTIMUM2 project and its associated products/services are included.

Informing: locating data into the target groups’ mindful and appreciative thought processes to ensure that OPTIMUM2 project is considered as an attractive and effective option in promoting sustainable transport planning.

Persuading: inducing the target groups to adopt the OPTIMUM2 methodology, its mobility management tools (measures) and its other associated activities, for example, the establishment of the LTPGs.

3 The Marketing Communication Planning Process

Based on the findings of Sargeant (2005), Guidemaps (2004), Kotler et al. (2002) and MOST (2000), this report develops a six steps model in designing a marketing communication plan. These are:

- Set marketing communications objectives;
- Specify target groups;
- Design marketing communication techniques;

- Set up schedule;
- Specify budget; and
- Monitor process and evaluate outcomes.

Step 1 Set marketing communications objectives

The aim of the Southwark Pilot marketing communication strategy is to enhance the awareness of the OPTIMUM2 project throughout the transport and planning professional communities and hence influence other organisations towards implementing similar schemes elsewhere. In addition, the strategy will aim to inform the project funding provider and other interest groups of the project results.

Step 2 Specify target groups

This particular marketing communication plan is primarily targeted at transport and land use consultants, academics and policy makers, although it may also be of interest to some employer and developer organisations, other interest groups, the media and the project funding provider. Based on the guidance of OPTIMUM2 (2005), this plan suggests the following as Southwark’s target groups. These are (Table 1):

Target groups	Description
<i>Primary</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transport and planning professional communities • Consultants • Academics 	<p>Holding a full range of knowledge and experience on travel plans and transport demand management strategies, these group of people are able to provide comments and recommendations for the OPTIMUM2 project. The Southwark Pilot can persuade them to try and adopt OPTIMUM2 scheme and product, use these group of people as a communication channel to promote OPTIMUM2 project by presenting some featured stories and TV interviews and so on. In addition, the links and resources with this group can be also used to enhance awareness and promote the project.</p> <p><i>Examples:</i> ACT, Transport2000, UoW, LU, consultants</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authorities/Policy makers • Politicians 	<p>It is crucial for these officials and policy makers to know and understand what the OPTIMUM2 project is and its complexity as well as possible benefits to the Southwark Borough and the whole region. Southwark Pilot needs to ally itself with policy makers through promoting and lobbying in order to make policy and legislative changes, secure more funding for the project and direct campaigns.</p> <p><i>Examples:</i> Local Council, DfT, TfL, LDA, GLA</p>
<i>Others</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interreg IIB • Project partners • ETON • Private business • The media 	<p>These are the internal groups who are interested what the Southwark Pilot has done.</p> <p><i>Examples:</i> Interreg IIB, Royal Devon and Exeter Hospital Project, Ede Industrial Park Project, IBM, Financial Times, BBC</p>

Table 1, Target Groups

Step 3 Design marketing communication techniques

This step specifies a set of marketing communication techniques to provide core information about the Southwark Pilot’s research activities in order to enhance the

awareness of the project and improve the image of the project. Techniques include **institutional technique**, **personalised technique**, and **networking** by using advertising, popular media outlets, professional and academic literature, events, conferences, informal personal networks, the internet and so on.

- *Institutional technique*: This is “to influence and win the support of groups mainly responsible for strategic decisions about a project and the distribution of resources” (Guidemaps, 2004). It aims to increase awareness of the project and obtain the support and commitment from professionals, policy makers through presentation, conference, professional publication, academic report, technical report, featured story and so on.

- *Personalised technique*: The Southwark Pilot can establish a dialogue channel with target groups through personalised communication, presentations, interviews and so on.

- *Networking*: Networking is a low cost method for increasing awareness of the OPTIMUM2 project through formal networking like conferences, seminars, associations, website and informal networking like word-of-mouth communication, personal networks and so on.

The above mentioned techniques are usually done through publicity channels in order to release project information, exchange ideas, publicise findings, promote project and reduce negative publicity. The Southwark Pilot needs to present information effectively and efficiently, capture the spirit of the OPTIMUM2 project and at the same time, motivate target groups to take action. In addition, publicity costs should also be taken into account when project operators select channels for communication. Table 2 suggests a list of communications channels suitable for the OPTIMUM2 project result marketing communication in Southwark.

Category	Sub-category	Specific Media	Frequency	Suitable for	
Advertisings	Media	TV/Radio/Newspaper	Occasionally	1-5, 9, 10	
	Poster	Road signboard, Bus	Occasionally	1-5, 9, 10	
Popular media	TV	News/feature stories	Occasionally	1-5, 9, 10	
	Radio	News/feature stories	Occasionally	1-5, 9, 10	
	Newspaper	News/feature stories	Occasionally	1-5, 9, 10	
	Film	Short stories	Occasionally	1, 2, 9	
Publications and printed materials	Professional journals	Traffic Engineering & Control (TEC) Local Transport Today (LTT) Surveyor	Occasionally	1-4, 6	
	Academic journals	Transport Policy Transportation Research International Journal of Transport Management Journal of Transport Geography	Occasionally	1, 3, 6	
	Reports	Project reports	Occasionally	1-5, 6, 7, 8	
	Organisation literature	Newsletters	Regularly	9, 10	
	Printed materials	Brochures Booklets Inserts	Occasionally	1-5, 9	
Events	Local events	Awareness events	Occasionally	1-10	
	National events	Associated with other campaigns	Occasionally		
Conference	National Conference	Academic	University Transport Studies Group (UTSG)	Regularly	1, 3
		Professional	Association for Commuter Transport Conference (ACT)	Regularly	1-3
	International Conference	Professional	European Conference on Mobility Management (ECOMM) European Transport Conference (ETC)	Regularly	1-3
Networks	Organisations	Association for Commuter Transport (ACT)	Continuously	1-4, 9	
	Other networks	London TravelWise Good Going	Continuously	1-4, 9	
Web	Project links	Southwark Borough (www.southwark.gov.uk) OPTMUM2 (www.optimum2.org)	Regularly	1-10	
	Government links	Department for Transport (www.dft.gov.uk) Transport for London (www.tfl.gov.uk) Greater London Authority (www.london.gov.uk) London Development Agency (www.lda.gov.uk) Association of London Government (www.alg.gov.uk) Seltrans (www.seltrans.org.uk)	Regularly	1-10	
	Professional organisation links	Association for Commuter Transport (www.act-uk.com) Transport 2000 (www.transport2000.org.uk) Association for European Transport (www.aetransport.co.uk)	Regularly	1-4, 9	
	Other campaign links	Good Going (www.goodgoing.co.uk) Bike Week (www.bikeweek.org.uk) London TravelWise (www.londontravelwise.org.uk)	Regularly	1-5, 9	

Table 2, Publicity Selection for Communication

Note:

- 1: Transport and planning professionals
- 2: Consultants
- 3: Academics
- 4: Authorities/policy makers
- 5: Politicians

- 6: Interreg IIIB
- 7: Project partners
- 8: ETON
- 9: Private business
- 10: The media

Step 4 Set up schedule

To ensure that all the communication activities undertaken are fully integrated, it is useful to specify the exact timing of each action. This will help the Southwark Pilot to ensure that each activity commences on the prescribed date and that any opportunities for synergy are fully exploited (Sargeant, 2005).

Actions	Target Dates
Update meetings with professionals and authorities	Every six months
Lobby with authorities like LDA, ALG, TfL to promote OPTIMUM2 scheme and seek their supports	By December 2005
Attend different conference and workshops to present OPTIMUM2 result	Continuous
Talk with consultants and academics or other research institutions to share information and expand networks	Continuous
Talk with other project partners to share experience and lessons	Continuous
Provide information to other interest groups, organisations or individuals	Continuous

Table 3, Marketing Communication Schedule

Step 5 Specify budget

Costs for implementing the marketing communication strategy may be associated with other tasks. Table 4 indicates the budget for the Southwark Pilot of the OPTIMUM2 project as a whole

Communication Tools	Estimated Cost
Publication (LTPG findings)	€29,000 ¹
Publication (Tools development)	€6,000
Conferences	€1,000
Total	€36,000

Table 4, Marketing and Communication for Southwark Pilot of the OPTIMUM2 Project Budget breakdown

Step 6 Monitor process and evaluate outcomes

Gilchrist (2002) states that the monitoring and evaluation of promotional work can:

- Help show that the funding raised has been spent effectively;
- Justify a request for further budget to continue and extend the work;
- Help refine programme so that it is more effective in the future.

By using focus groups, questionnaires, records, evaluation sheets, surveys and so forth, the Southwark Pilot can ask for feedback from target groups in order to assess the efficiency and effectiveness of marketing communication strategy. Table 6 shows a set of relevant indicators and measures:

¹ Euro €1 ≈ GBP £0.6727. Visit www.xe.com. Last accessed 14 November 2005.

Process Measures	Outcome Measures
<p>Change in policy and infrastructure</p> <p>Indicators: For example, a UDP planning document integrated with travel plans within the council</p> <p><i>Measures: observation</i></p>	<p>Change in knowledge</p> <p>Indicators: Changes in awareness of facts, information, options, and recommendations</p> <p><i>Measures: survey/ interview</i></p>
<p>Reach and frequency</p> <p>Indicators: number of people who are exposed to a campaign element, and number of times they were exposed</p> <p><i>Measures: survey/count</i></p>	<p>Responses to campaign elements</p> <p>Indicators: Number of telephone queries, information (material) requests</p> <p><i>Measures: count</i></p>
<p>Media coverage</p> <p>Indicators: column inches in journals, newspapers, minutes on television or radio, number of people attending events</p> <p><i>Measures: count</i></p>	<p>Awareness of campaign</p> <p>Indicators: Percentage of people aware of the project. Have you ever heard about alternative travelling measures? What have you recently heard about OPTIMUM2? Where did you hear about OPTIMUM2?</p> <p><i>Measures: Survey</i></p>
<p>Dissemination of materials</p> <p>Number of programme materials disseminated</p> <p><i>Measures: Count</i></p>	-

Table 6: Monitoring and Evaluation Measurement (Kotler et al., 2002)

More details about how to monitor and evaluate the whole programme are discussed in the report of ‘Developing a Monitoring and Evaluation Framework’ prepared by Loughborough University for the Southwark Pilot.

4 Conclusions and recommendations

In conclusion, it is recommended that a six stage model based on marketing communication theory be adopted as a framework to create a marketing communication plan suitable for use by the Southwark OPTIMUM2 Pilot. These stages are:

- Set marketing communications objectives
- Specify target groups
- Design marketing communication techniques
- Set up schedule
- Specify budget
- Monitor process and evaluate outcomes

In particular, it is important that clear target groups be identified and that they be served with well defined messages delivered through suitable and cost effective media channels. It is also crucial that the process is comprehensively monitored so that a useful evaluation exercise may be undertaken and lessons learnt for similar future projects.

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