Internal Communications Plan and Strategy for A Cultural Project

A Project-Based Thesis on the Berlin Music Week 2012

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Abstract

The objective of the thesis was to create an internal communications strategy. The cultural project Berlin Music Week 2012 proved to be a suitable project for this purpose. The process of planning internal communication and its importance on a company's organizational behaviour was described.

Most project work related jobs bring together different individuals from various backgrounds. The short-term commitments of the team members make it necessary to have a working communication structure. Especially internal communication is essential for flawless work procedures.

The thesis introduces the basics of the communication process, describes how internal communication is planned and how it should be executed. The theory also gives a short overview on how leadership styles influence internal communications in a business context.

The thesis is a project-based study about the importance of strong and working internal communications in project work. In its conclusion it is explained that internal communication is a process that needs space for development. Nevertheless, the very short production phase of the Berlin Music Week made it impossible to implement the internal communication plan.

Keywords
Internal communication, communication process, planning communication, strategy, organizational behaviour

Miscellaneous

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1 INTRODUCTION

Directly supervised by the cultural institution Kulturprojekte Berlin GmbH (KPB) and financially supported by the Senate Department for Economics, Technology and Research (Senatsverwaltung für Wirtschaft, Technologie und Forschung), Berlin Music Week (BMW) operates in its third year. Due to its very young nature, the project's internal communication is still in need of development. The current framework consists of only two original core members of the previous Berlin Music Week production team. The development of the whole concept achieved a better focus within the last three years with the establishment of a working internal communications plan. In addition, Berlin Music Week has to follow the organizational structure, guidelines and rules of Kulturprojekte Berlin GmbH, which has an influence on the overall communication as well.

This thesis works as a guideline for establishing an internal communications plan and strategy for the cultural project Berlin Music Week 2012. Because of this it is necessary to introduce the current situation of internal communications, the available communication channels and the possible development of these tools for the further improvement of the project's communication. The thesis focuses on the internal communication of the Berlin Music Week and emphasizes the necessity of working communication within the production team. Therefore, external communications are not discussed.

During the writing process of this thesis, the author was working as Assistant to the Project Director of the Berlin Music Week. This position gave the necessary angle to have an overview of all the departments of the project, including the communication between the project management and administration. The decision to create an internal communications plan and strategy was made when the author felt that the project team was constantly

facing problems within the communication process, which seemed to have an impact on the planning and execution of a successful event.

2 THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 The communication process

Regardless of the field, internal communications will always play the key role for a group of people who work together in a company or project. In order to understand the concept of internal communications it is necessary to keep the model of the basic communication process in mind.

The definition of communication itself according to Slee and Harwood (2004) can simply be described as who says what to whom via what channels and with what effect. Plunkett (1979, 47) describes it as "a transmission of information and understanding from one person to another through the use of common symbols". Furthermore, communication is a two-way process where a message goes from the communicator to the receiver, who has to be responsive in order for the communication process to be a successful one (van Schalkwyk, 1992, 3).

A

SOURCE
(SENDER)

→ Information →

B

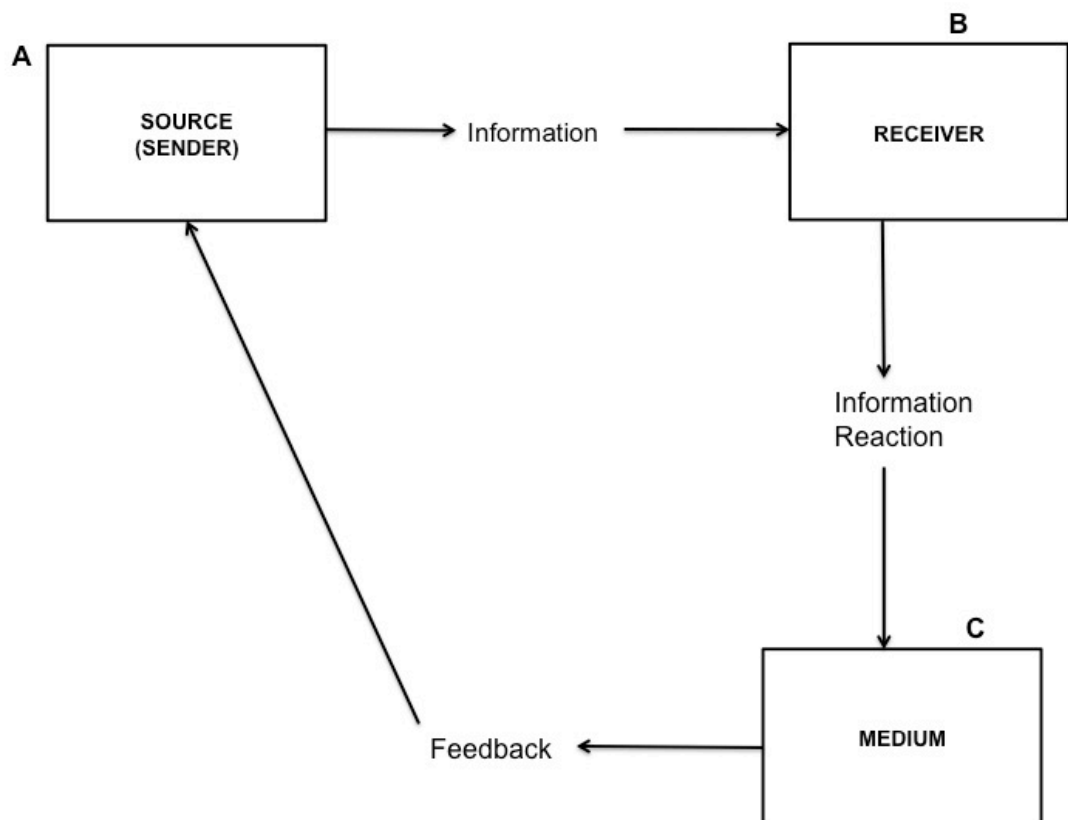RECEIVER

Information
Reaction

C

MEDIUM

Feedback ←

Figure 1. Communication Process. Adapted from The Commonwealth of Learning. (2000)

In general, the communication process can be pictured as in Figure 1. The medium describes pictures, words or actions. It is important that the process between the sender and receiver are balanced equally to ensure that the message can pass through (Denisova, 2007,11).

However, despite a focus on internal communication strategies, it is important to make a clear distinction between the perception of internal and external communication. According to Thitthongkam, Walsh and Bunchapattanasakda (2011, 6), Thill (2004) describes internal communication as the process going up, down and across the organization, while external communication refers to all communication processes carried into and out of the organization. This means that all interaction between the organisation and the public or other outside organizations through media such as press releases or letters can be

described as external communication (An Introduction to Concepts in Language and Communication, 2000, 24).

Internal communications live and die with the appropriate or inappropriate usage of different communication channels. In order to guarantee the success of these channels, it is necessary to identify them and clearly define them towards the team (Wood, J., 1999), since it can never be assured that the entire team has understood the provided piece of information. This assumption of the management is, according to Thill and Bovée (2002, 7), the biggest problem of internal communications, since just because the management is aware of the message does not mean that everyone else is, too.

2.2   Internal communications in a business context

Every company needs to establish a strategy and plan their internal communication so as to be also successful in their external communication. The leader (e.g. a Project Director) of a project team or organization needs to know what communication strategy and plan he wants to establish, because his entire leadership style has a strong influence on the internal communication. Farrant (2003, 13) says that every leader has the responsibility to be aware of this and adjust the methods and usage of internal communication tools in order to avoid tension, anxiety, misinterpretation and bad communication across the team. The advantage of providing a team with a functional internal communications strategy and plan is the trust that the leader gains from the team. Whenever it is clear to an employee what internal communications tool or method is used in a given situation, communication problems can be avoided (A Quick History of Internal Communication and its Business Value, n.d., 3).

Internal communications in a company need to be based on certain policies, which need to be clear to the team in order to result in the achieved goals. The language should to be simple in order to ensure that the team can grasp the message. Especially the leader or line manager of a company has the

responsibility to communicate what the team is expected to do and how they are supposed to do it. The leader's obligation to the team involves the internal communications strategy and plan. The result should be everyone's awareness of what needs to be done, since according to James Farrant, (2003, 14) it is a two-way encounter. Therefore, every leader needs to know that an overall internal communication strategy is essential and that it has an impact on the success of a project.

It is, of course, impossible for a leader to be available in person all the time, but this is when internal communication policies help to create an ideal environment in which a team of individuals works together as one unit by taking advantage of the provided communications guidelines (Op. cit. p. 43.). According to Hume (2001, 5), planning and developing internal communications should never have a due date but have significance regardless of the time and situation.

The communication process can sometimes suffer from interruptions, so-called communication barriers. These barriers can be described as something that can disturb good communication (see Figure 2) or even make it impossible for people to interact (Crowther, 1995, 84).
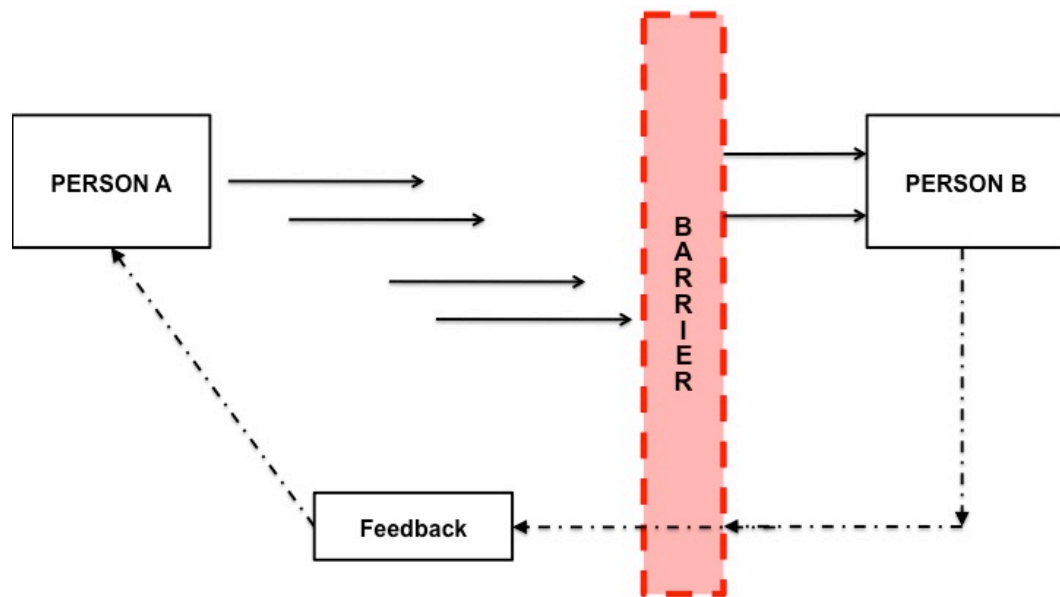
Figure 2. "A barrier to communication between two people". An Introduction to Concepts in Language and Communication 2000.

The communication process can be influenced by different factors. According to Longest, Rakich and Darr (2000), some of these factors are environmental and personal barriers. An example of an environmental barrier is time. In many companies the lack of time prevents the listener of a message from reconsidering the message heard (Guo, Kristina L., Sanchez Yesenia, 2005), which often leads to misunderstanding and misinterpretation. The same source describes that another environmental barrier is the hierarchy and status of the members in a department or project team. Furthermore, within an organizational hierarchy, people are influenced by personal barriers, which describe the issues that emerge due to a person's cultural background, prior experiences and personal values. The most challenging personal barrier, nevertheless, is the lack of empathy, which has a high level of influence on the messages that are sent and received. Nevertheless, Guo and Sanchez (2005) also state that barriers can be overcome by conscious efforts to devote time and attention to communication.

To overcome the problem of misconception it is therefore necessary to find suitable channels of communication. Communication channels can be divided into verbal and nonverbal ones.

2.2.1   Verbal and nonverbal communication

As the word already says, verbal communication describes all processes that are spoken, but this can also be applied to written words. Dependent on the situation, face-to-face meetings are on the top level of the communication channels due to their delivery information-rich messages. This type of meeting allows the communicators to transmit a message with an immediate response to it.

Written verbal communication can be an e-mail message. Even though e-mails can be very detailed, it can take a while to receive an answer to the message and the receiver of the message might misinterpret the information, since written words cannot transmit emotions in the same way as spoken ones do. An e-mail message might also be read just partly, which might mean that important parts of the information do not come across. There might be a so-called netiquette, which describes communication rules on how to communicate on the Internet (Guo, Kristina L., Sanchez Yesenia, 2005), but they will not prevent people from misinterpreting the messages they receive. According to a study by Plantronics (2010), e-mail conversations dominate the communication within a company, especially nowadays, and an impact on the internal communications cannot be avoided.

When no words for the transmission of information are used, nonverbal communication takes place (An Introduction to Concepts in Language and Communication, 2000, 20). Nonverbal communication can also be seen as the reinforcement of verbal communication, since information is transmitted through body language (Op. cit. p. 20.). According to Guo and Sanchez (2005), nonverbal communication is sharing information without using words to encode messages. In the same study they state that Nelson and Quick (2004) brought attention to four basic forms of nonverbal communication,

which are proxemics, kinesics, facial and eye behaviour. This means that nonverbal communication describes how one's perception and use of space is influenced (proxemics), how body language is read (kinesics), and how facial and eye behaviour is interpreted. For example, eye contact in a conversation can communicate that the sent message is understood and that the receiver is interested in the information. Therefore, it is important to be aware of one's own eye contact behaviour in order to avoid misinterpretation of the message (An Introduction to Concepts in Language and Communication, 2000, 21). The main idea of Guo and Sanchez about nonverbal communication describes a situation where someone misunderstands the actual meaning of a spoken word due to the misinterpretation of body language or vocal intonation of the message's sender. It is difficult to avoid misunderstandings within nonverbal communication, since the information of the received message is dependent on the receiver's personal perception.

Nonverbal communication can especially play a role when communicating with someone from a different cultural background (Hargie et all, 2004, p. 38). Gestures and signs can differ dramatically from culture to culture (Dixon et all, n.d.), and it is therefore vital to do research and discover what it means to make eye-contact, use hand gestures, and especially to find out what is taboo (Goman, 2002) in the other culture. Dixon and O'Hara (n.d.) detail awareness of nonverbal behaviour and state that it can be the key skill to improve one's own ability to communicate with others.

Two additional forms of nonverbal communication have to do with the personal space and distance, and the personal appearance. According to Dixon and O'Hara, it is the distance people put between themselves and others that can be used to create feelings and indicates the balance of power. This usually reflects within a conversation when a person of a higher status is the one who controls the level of distance and degree of approach during this communication process. According to Dixon and O'Hara (n.d., 15), Wilson and Nias (1999) state that research has shown that the more one takes care of one's personal appearance and presentation, the more advantage one has in life.

In order to make nonverbal communication become a beneficial part of a company's internal communications strategy, it is essential that the team's awareness of their own nonverbal cues and their likely impact are developed through self-monitoring (Dixon et all, n.d., 15). Within a company's communication process it should, therefore, be a core activity to choose the right channel for communication in order to guarantee the transmission of a message and its successful reception. This means that guidelines on how to communicate need to be established and spread throughout the company. Just sending out guidelines will not be sufficient. Creating a strategy for the company's communication needs to be an on-going process and become part of the corporate mission.

2.2.2 Internal communication channels

The best solution for the implementation of an internal communications strategy is the introduction of the previously mentioned communications channels. They give internal communication the accurate environment to flourish and transport information within the team accordingly.

The most common form of an internal communication channel is face-to-face communication. This form of communication is not only the most appreciated one, but also the most effective one. It promises a two-way communication with the possibility for an immediate response on both sides (Farrant, 2003, 50). Farrant (2003, 33) also describes that if this two-way communication is not given, it cannot be called face-to-face communication. Unfortunately, new technology such as e-mails, make it easy to believe that this kind of communication channel becomes irrelevant, since it is time consuming. Nevertheless, people will also engage to setting up face-to-face meetings, since this is how people establish and cherish their (business) relationships (Farrant, 2003, 51).

Another internal communications channel that still is used in organizations are notice boards. They are considered very old-fashioned, the information on them needs to be kept simple, and it should be remembered that this communication channel needs an actual effort to keep it up-to-date (Farrant, 2003, 34-35) so as to be of actual use for the company's internal communications. In comparison to this communication channel the one with the biggest benefit of transferring information in a fast and easy way is the electronic mail service, better known as e-mail.

With this communication channel it is possible to share information with a wider range of people without a great deal of effort, due to the possibility of sending out so-called mass e-mails (Farrant, 2003, 35). The danger of e-mail communication can be that information is not kept simple and short for the most of the time and that the core idea of the message is lost. Farrant (2003, 35) also explains that e-mails tend to replace the actual face-to-face interaction between people, which might encourage the writer to disengage with the sender of the message. Furthermore, e-mail communication tends to encourage people to spread useless information over more useful content.

The core idea of communication channels is to provide the team with the information they need and require. It is important to keep in mind that no internal communications plan and strategy can work in an appropriate manner by using only one communication channel (Farrant, 2003, 39). It is crucial that several communication channels are used in order to influence the flow of communication within a company. Nevertheless, Farrant (2003) reminds that it is crucial to keep in mind that the content within the different communication channels is kept simple and understandable throughout the different departments that need to know about it. Without properly working communication channels and accurate usage, internal communications cannot work accordingly.

3 BERLIN MUSIC WEEK

3.1 Berlin Music Week 2012

The mission statement states that with the Berlin Music Week, the city (of Berlin) has a platform that ties activities, commitment, diversity, passion, synergies, communication and charisma into one. The Berlin Music Week 2012 operated under the organizational structure of the cultural institution Kulturprojekte Berlin GmbH (Cultural Projects Berlin). During the time from 5th to 9th of September the BMW worked under the strict supervision of Kulturprojekte Berlin to balance the communication between national and international partners and clients. The project was funded by and dependent on the Senate Department for Economics, Technology and Research (Senatsverwaltung für Wirtschaft, Technologie und Forschung).

The final production team was announced by March 2012. Three out of these 14 people were full-time employees of Kulturprojekte Berlin GmbH; everyone else in the team was hired as a freelancer. Nevertheless, the three full-time workers, two of the freelance workers and 4 interns of the BMW were located in the office facilities of the KPB. The main language of the project was German, but due to the backgrounds of two native English speakers in the team most of the internal communication was handled in English.

3.2 BMW history

Under the name Berlin Music Week formats like the music fair Popkomm, the open-air festival Berlin Festival, the all2gethernow workshop and the Berlin Clubnight (Berlin Clubnacht) were introduced to the city of Berlin under one umbrella brand in 2010. Unfortunately, this neat package also caused the first problems: with the cancellation of the Berlin Festival due to miscalculation within the area of crowd control a professional permission to start was not given.

Another part of the Berlin Music Week, Popkomm, was already known for its earlier economic problems. Popkomm used to be the biggest international music and media industry music fair and meeting point in Germany. After its cancellation due to bankruptcy in 2009 it was brought back as part of the Berlin Music Week in 2010.

The institution called Club Commission was responsible for the execution of the Berlin Clubnight. The main idea of this club night is to make it possible to visit 44 clubs in Berlin with the purchase of only one ticket. Club Commission's main responsibility is to help keep the club culture alive, and to provide sustained support for the club and event venue owners in political and economic matters.

All2gethernow (a2n) describes itself as an independent platform that aims to find new strategies within the music business and cultural landscape. Its core business lies in organizing different DIY (do it yourself) workshops, get-togethers and panel discussions about topics evolving around the music industry and its core audience such as musicians, managers and industry professionals.

In 2011 all these different parts were united once more, and the Berlin Music Week was arranged for the second time. While the Berlin Music Week had its headquarters located outside of the Popkomm, the music fair with its different conference formats and the Berlin Festival were located once more at the former airport Tempelhof facilities. In the second year of this combined music and media get-together it became obvious that the times of selling cubic centimetres were long over. The visitor numbers for the music fair were very low, and many of the business professionals arranged their appointments in the city, far away from the B2B-platform of Popkomm and the Berlin Music Week. With the announcement for 2012 that the Popkomm will be under "conceptual construction", new opportunities for the development of the Berlin Music Week concept to become the most important annual meeting place for the music and media industry professionals opened up.

3.3   The new concept

In order to develop the BMW in its third year further, it was important to collect feedback on the different areas of the project from the most important target audience of the Berlin Music Week: Berlin's music and media industry's key players. Their insight knowledge and the fact that their opinion was considered during the production phase of the BMW made it possible to regain the trust and support of the most valuable business professionals. Due to the previous negative experiences with the old formats of the legendary German music fair Popkomm, which was operating as part of the Berlin Music Week during the first two years, it was necessary to finally establish a platform of trust and involve especially those people that had been left out in the past.

Introducing the Berlin Music Week as an independent organizer of a music showcase and conference event operating without the old fashioned formats of Popkomm was the first important step. This did not come as a surprise as the organizers of the Popkomm had cancelled the music fair for 2012. The cancellation of the Popkomm was the opportunity to start with a blank sheet of paper and create a business environment for the needs of the industry professionals. For this matter a selected group of the already mentioned key players of Berlin were invited to become part of the advisory board of the Berlin Music Week ("Beirat"). The main concern was to abandon the selling of cubic centimetres within a venue for company booths and to create content that the music industry landscape of Berlin could benefit from. The advisory board would convene three to four times a year.

3.3.1   A centralized location at Berlin's "Osthafen"

The programme of the two previous Berlin Music Weeks was - content-wise - as big as the third edition. The difference, nevertheless, was definitely in the ideal decision to centralize all important hotspots within one area. The new concept needed its main hotspot, and it was quickly found within the facilities of Spreespeicher in the heart of Berlin's Osthafen. The advantage of this new location was the short walking distances between Berlin's most important

music and media headquarters, venues and nightclubs. This involved among others the facilities of Universal Music Germany, Germany's exclusive music hotel Nhow and the TV-production studios of the former MTV/VIVA located at Fernsehwerft. Additionally, the centralization of the location made it possible to offer the visitors of the Berlin Music Week one meeting point where it was possible to hold appointments, receive all the information concerning the BMW and attend panels with industry related topics and issues. The visitors could start experiencing the music week, do business and network without exhaustion from riding a taxi all day long.

3.3.2 Programme highlights

With the disappearance of the B2B and conference-platform Popkomm it was now up to the Berlin Music Week team to ensure that the business and conference side of the event was not left out. The development of the new concept resulted in a conference called "Word on Sound". The curator was someone unknown to the Berlin scene and therefore open-minded to experiment with new and exciting ways rather than adhere to old school museum ideas. This also gave the advantage that the merger of old and new formats attracted a broader target audience. With the final combination of having had feedback from the Berlin industry people involved in the advisory board of the BMW and of talking and listening to former and new partners and clients, it was possible to establish trust on the different key areas.

In the first two years of the Berlin Music Week showcases also took place. Unfortunately, their attention was limited due to the immense problem of being spread all over the big city and away from the main headquarters of Popkomm and Berlin Music Week. The new concept ensured that all showcases took place throughout the different clubs, venues, bars and coffee shops close to Spreespeicher and Osthafen.

The new concept of the BMW also needed development in regard to ticket sales. In the previous music weeks the confusing number of different tickets and wristbands for the different formats taking place during the BMW resulted

in unsatisfied customers. Therefore, the ticketing process needed to become as logical as the take-over of the centralized location at Osthafen. The solution for the problem was to offer three types of tickets instead of almost 20 different ones before. The first option was targeted towards people interested in participating mainly in the Club festival. This meant one ticket that allowed access to the entire programme content of BMW's club programme, including Club Commission's Berlin Clubnacht, ICAS Suite's events and Berlin Music Week's own showcase happenings. For the main target group of the Berlin Music Week, namely music and media professionals, there were two ticket categories. The premium version included public transportation, the Berlin Festival with access to the VIP-lounge, the club programme and the conference formats of "Word on Sound". The second option differed by excluding the Berlin Festival.

3.4   Invitation and cooperation of industry multipliers

As mentioned earlier, the trust of the industry needed to be won back. The decreasing success of the Popkomm music fair format had a negative influence on Berlin being accepted as the new standpoint for industry events. Nevertheless, a great number of business professionals knew the potential of Berlin to become the new hotspot for an industry showcase and conference format. Therefore, another focus of BMW's new concept was to cooperate with the important players of the industry. This involved Berlin based companies such as Club Commission.

On the international level previous connections with the music export offices were helpful. However, working together with them was quite complicated. The overwhelming number of already existing showcase formats all over the world exhausted their need for another showcase festival. Therefore, it was necessary to find out what the Berlin Music Week could provide and offer the music export offices. For this purpose, key people from the music export offices were invited to Berlin to have open round-table discussions and to introduce the new concept.

4 INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS PLAN OF THE BERLIN MUSIC WEEK

4.1 Situation Analysis/Background

In the beginning of the project phase the team was introduced to the mission and values of BMW 2012 by the Project Director (PD). However, an actual internal communications plan had not been established yet. The most important agenda of the communication process was to assure that the team was communicating. The final decisions required the approval of the PD before further steps could be taken. Unfortunately, not everyone in the production team followed these instructions and ignored this mandatory internal communications path. This often led to misunderstandings and frustration within the team. Furthermore, crucial decisions like budgetary measures were undertaken without the consent and consult of the PD and responsible departments.

Due to the non-existence of an internal communications plan, the communication flow was impossible to supervise and coordinate. The primary form of internal communications, despite shared office facilities with one part of the team, was e-mail conversations or phone calls. Face-to-face conversations were, unfortunately, a low priority. This way of informal communication and a missing internal communications plan and strategy led to personal issues within the production team. Therefore, an internal communications plan needed to be established for future production teams of the cultural project Berlin Music Week in order to avoid problems and misunderstanding within the group.

4.2   Target audience

Within a project different messages are communicated on various levels. Thus, it is important to define the target audience. In order to assure a positive outcome of this internal communication strategy, I examined three target audiences.

The first target audience included everyone that was involved with the internal communication, namely the production team. The second target audience was the Project Director. Although part of the production team, he needed to be considered an individual due to his power of influencing the implementation of the final internal communication strategy and policies. The CEO of Kulturprojekte Berlin, representing the entire organization that BMW belongs to, did not have an active influence on the internal communication of the project itself, but needed to be informed and aware of its implementation and existence. However, this third target audience was not taken under consideration in this thesis at all. The focus of this thesis in regard to the target audience was a combination of the first and second group, since they were the main characters working with the implemented plan.

4.3   Internal communication strategy

4.3.1   Goal and objectives

The overall goal of the internal communication strategy was to improve the internal communications to ensure that the individuals in the project would have all the necessary information so as to make sensible decisions. In order to successfully reach this goal, four objectives were set. Not only was it important that everyone in the production team knew the mission and vision of the BMW, but also that all the general rules of the internal communication methods needed to be brought to everyone's attention. Furthermore, communication channels should be used in a transparent manner. This would give the advantage that everyone in the team would know about the

developments within the different responsibility areas at all time. Nevertheless, the most important objective in order to guarantee a positive outcome was to create opportunities to give and receive feedback. For more information about the objectives, please see a detailed description in Appendix 3.

4.3.2 Key messages

Every strategy has its important message that needs to be communicated. The key message of information also lives from its focus on the right target audience.

The key message for BMW's internal communication plan and strategy says that coherent internal communication provides a platform to find and share information in a team. Furthermore, a sustained internal communications plan and strategy has a positive impact on the quality of organizational behaviour.

This means that a functioning internal communication is crucial to a project's outcome and success. Secondly, using the provided communication tools and channels should be encouraged. This will make it possible for the team to actively share information with each other. As a result it can be expected that misunderstandings are lowered since people know how to communicate. This encourages them to talk about problems openly, if they emerge, rather than letting one issue grow into a difficult situation.

4.3.3 Tactics

Within this thesis three target audiences were mentioned. Nevertheless, the communication plan reached out to the entire production team including the Project Director.

Within the first objective it was described that it was essential for the project team to understand the value of the project's mission and vision. Therefore, a

team workshop in the very beginning of the project phase was recommended. This would give the Project Director the chance to introduce the (new) team members to each other and to share the most important policies and principles of the BMW. Furthermore, a first glance at the hierarchy and the different responsibility areas can be taken. This leaves also room for further discussions in case of any questions. One additional advantage that this team workshop offers is that it introduces the background of the company behind the Berlin Music Week. Due to the fact that Berlin Music Week is working under another company's organizational structure, it is necessary to inform the team about the guidelines and policies of Kulturprojekte Berlin GmbH.

For a consistent understanding of these matters throughout the production team, it is suggested that it should have this team workshop once a year at the very beginning of the production phase. One reason for this is the fact that the project might have a change in staff every year.

The second objective to achieve the final goal talks about the necessity that the team is familiar with the project's internal communication tools and methods. This information is crucial and needs to be written. Thus, the communication team needs to deliver a handbook to the team. This gives the advantage that information in regard to internal communication can be updated and extended.

This leads to the third objective. If internal communication is part of every day business and does not feel like an unclear burden, people will use it without doubts. Furthermore, the level of insecure information sharing will be replaced with the transparent use of communication channels. As a result each individual in the team is informed about the current state of the project on all levels and does not hold back important information. This communication flow creates trust, which eventuates in people willing to listen and to speak up. A concrete tactic to take advantage of this objective is to keep protocols of all important meetings and to hold face-to-face meetings at least once a week.

Once the communication process is steady, it will create an atmosphere that makes people respect each other's opinion. In order to strengthen this attitude, it is crucial to allow feedback channels to become part of the organization. The team also needs to be able to state what matters are not as they should be. Feedback leaves room for the project's development. This objective requires strong contribution from the team leader's side. In the end, he is the one to make the final decisions, to listen and evaluate and to encourage the team.

4.3.4 Summary of the implementation plan

The timeline in this implementation plan can only be assumed due to the unclear start of the project. This is due to the fact that the Senate of Berlin funds the BMW and it is therefore not certain when a budget for hiring staff is released and approved.

The responsibility section is considered on the grounds that the same line managers will work on the project as in 2012. Table 1 gives an overview of the implementation steps of the internal communication plan and strategy.

Tactic	Responsibility	Timeline
Objective #1:		
A team workshop to introduce the team, the project's mission and vision and the principles of the project	Project Director	In the beginning of the project when production team is complete
Introduction of the guidelines and background of the project and the organization behind it	Project Director/PR Manager	Within the first two weeks of the project's production phase
Objective #2:		
Staff handbook with guidelines	Communications Team	Within first month of the project's start
Objective #3:		
Minutes of meetings are documented through protocols	Assistant to Project Director and interns; if neither Assistant nor interns are participating the meeting	Within 1 week following each meeting
Approving protocols	Project Director	Within 2 days of receiving protocol
Protocols are shared with the entire team via e-mail	Assistant to Project Director	Right after protocol is approved by Project Director
In case of urgent matters team members outside the office facilities get contacted via phone	Assistant to Project Director	Immediately when case occurs
Taking care of invitations to meetings via e-mail/calendar notification and/or phone call	Assistant to Project Director	On the same day meeting is confirmed
Providing update on own responsibility area's developments to the Project Director	Line Managers	Once a week
Objective #4:		
Team members send suggestions for topics they want to discuss with the team via e-mail to the PD	Production Team	Once a week and latest one day before weekly group meeting

Table 1. Summary of implementation process.

4.4 Budget

The budget estimation for the internal communications plan and strategy was left out in this thesis. All necessary resources concerning communication methods are already accounted for. Nevertheless, if new communication goals and methods are established, a revision of the budget is recommended.

4.5 Measurement

Measuring success on internal communication can be done when the set goals and objectives are reached. At this stage it cannot be said if the established plan and strategy are successful. Nevertheless, it became obvious during the events of the Berlin Music Week 2012 that taking the time to create a plan and strategy was already a success. Due to the young nature of the project there is still a great deal of potential on how to shape the plan during the upcoming years.

The first important step that needs to be taken is the actual implementation of the plan. The plan will be shared with the Project Director of the Berlin Music Week. The implementation, however, cannot be forced, only suggested.

Furthermore, one person in the production team needs to be in charge of internal communication and its development. By following the suggested guidelines, an estimation of the possible adjustments can be made. During the production phase it is also advisable to introduce a survey to the team. The survey gives an indication if the set internal communication guidelines are working and if the team is satisfied or if adjustments are required.

5 RESULTS

This thesis' main objective was to create an internal communications plan and strategy for the Berlin Music Week. It became quite clear in the beginning of the project that the absences of a solid strategy for internal communication lead to problems within the team. Consequently, this thesis is meant as a guideline for future production teams to develop internal communication. Due to the very late start and short production phase of the project it was impossible to implement the plan for the Berlin Music Week 2012. Nevertheless, the Berlin Music Week is a three-year-old event and thus still has the possibility to work on its production team's internal communication.

During the research process of the theoretical background it seemed difficult at first to find suitable material. The main concern was that a focus on internal communication was impossible. Most of the literature gave priority to external communication, and the establishment of an internal communication strategy seemed hopeless. Nevertheless, once the right literature was found, it became quite clear that the lack of a strategy for internal communication was an immense problem. The team was using different channels and tools to communicate, but there were no guidelines on how to do this. Different meeting scenarios ended in unresolved issues, and information was not shared among the team. Many misunderstandings could have been avoided if an internal communications plan had already existed. After all, internal communication is described as one of the essentials for a project's success. Therefore, it was crucial to understand the basics of the communication process, establish a strategy for future project teams and to point out that communication also happens when we do not talk to each other. Especially nonverbal communication became a burden throughout the team structure.

The difficulty to communicate was the basis for this thesis, and the objective was to make a change. The Project Director of the Berlin Music Week is aware that internal communications need development and that this issue needs attention. The plan and strategy has to be seen as a guideline that can

be adjusted according to the circumstances. At this moment it cannot be guaranteed nor confirmed that the same people will work together on the future music weeks. Therefore, it is especially important that this thesis and its suggestions are taken seriously in order to avoid the same problems again. The organization behind the Berlin Music Week has to understand that this project needs more than just funding. The reason why the BMW was established in the first place was that the city of Berlin hired Kulturprojekte Berlin to create a platform for music and media professionals. The wish of the city was an annual event that would attract national and international audience and result in Europe's most important industry event. Nevertheless, this can only be achieved if the Berlin Music Week's organizational culture works flawlessly. In order for internal communication to flourish and develop, a steady production team dedicated to the project and the people is required.

6 CONCLUSION

Establishing an internal communications plan is not a one-time event. The creation of the basic structure might be that, but once one works on the issue of internal communication, one will realize that this is a lifetime challenge. The biggest challenge for me to write this plan was the fact that my time within the project was temporary. Furthermore, the final production team was introduced at a time where the project should already have had a steady workforce. This lead into misunderstandings that continued even after the project was over. It is clear that the focus of the Berlin Music Week in the previous years was not to have perfect communication, but to be one of the most important industry events. Nevertheless, success needs a team with shared aims and hopes. The lack of internal communication resulted in people putting their own personal aims before the overall one.

It cannot be confirmed that the objectives of this thesis can be reached, since it is up to the Project Director to decide if he wants to take advantage of the guidelines or not. Nevertheless, as long as the basics of an organizational structure do not work, the Berlin Music Week will always have the same

outcome and no chance for development. In this year's Berlin Music Week certain wars might have been fought behind the scene, but if internal communication does not become an essential part of the project, more drastic problems will occur.

Recommendations for the future of the Berlin Music Week are, first of all, that it should create and hold a steady production team. Changing the characters and team dynamics each year in a project is exhausting and has an impact on the development of the Berlin Music Week. People will not necessarily put much dedication into temporary project work. Even more important is to make them want to come back. This requires though a team that supports each other, listens and most of all communicates. Unspoken matters will result in misunderstandings and a negative work atmosphere. It is normal that each company builds its smaller groups. However, if the size of the project team is already so small that it is impossible to avoid each other, being confronted with tension every day at work is inevitable. It results in lower work quality and higher risks of failure. A production team needs to work together in all circumstances. Individuals need to leave their pride behind and focus on the common goal of satisfying the partners and clients.

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8 APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Team structure of the Berlin Music Week 2012
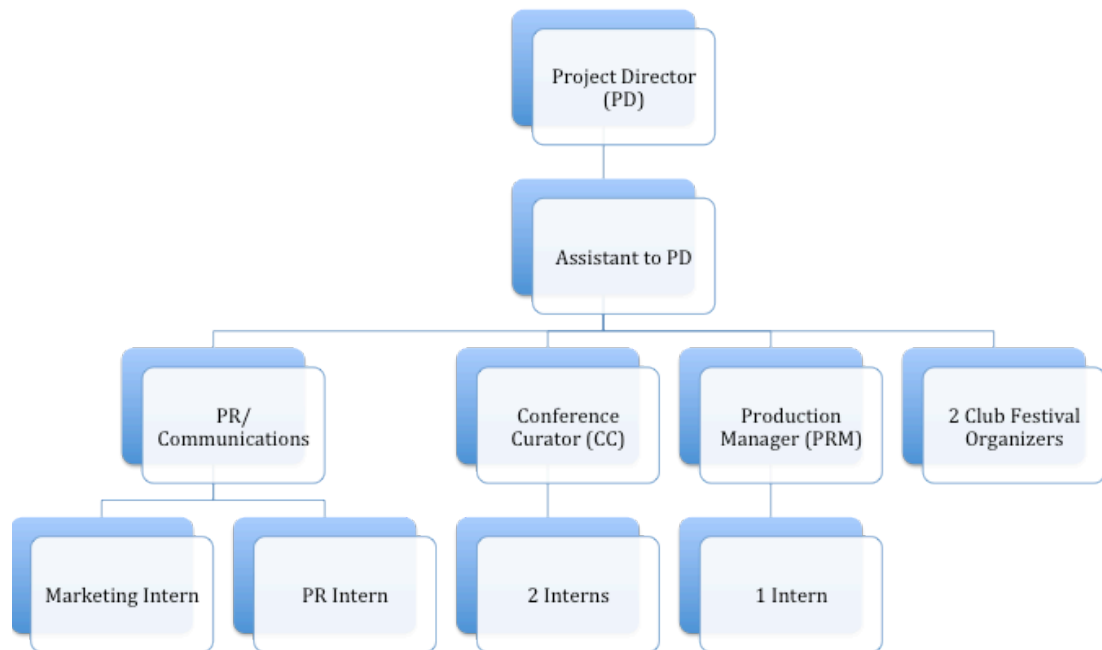
The responsibilities of the project's team members:

Project Director (PD)

His main responsibility was to supervise and guide the team towards the common goal: a successful Berlin Music Week 2012. Together with his assistant he was in charge of communicating with external clients and negotiate contracts and contents of the different event areas. He also was responsible for the project's entire budget. Furthermore, the PD was assuring that the CEO of Kulturprojekte Berlin GmbH was aware of all new developments and changes of the BMW.

Assistant to Project Director

The Assistant supported the PD with all relevant departments including budget, conception, networking, project development and controlling, preparation and follow-up of appointments and public appearances, as well as partner and customer acquisition. General office management duties also involved, next to general administration jobs, conducting, supervising, monitoring and accounting of requests of quotations and commissions upon consultation with the Project Director. Further responsibilities required participation at partner meetings, preparation of protocols and follow-up of all planned work procedures. Supporting the PD also meant to help with the development of the concept, drafting contracts and assisting with the controlling of the project's budget.

Conference Curator

The curator took care of developing the concept of Berlin Music Week's conference in close cooperation with the partners. In addition, she prepared the keynotes, workshops and panel discussion.

PR/Communication Team

This team consisted of a Marketing Manager and a PR Manager. The main task of the Marketing Manager was to establish a marketing plan and strategy, set valuable deadlines for the marketing strategy and implement the marketing plan according to the marketing budget provided and supervised by the Project Director.

Club Festival Organizers

Two people took care of the organization of the Club Festival. One person was responsible for everything that needed to be done on a local basis, for example getting all authorizations of the different concert venues that participated in the Club Festival, as well as negotiate all necessary contracts. The second person was responsible for all the international matters of the Club Festival such as finding suitable artists, taking care of the artist submission, representing the BMW on international level at different conference and showcase formats (e.g. SXSW in Austin, Texas, Tallinn Music

Week, SPOT Festival in Denmark) and presenting the new format of the BMW to the most important key players responsible for the success of a format like BMW (e.g. embassies, music export offices).

Both representatives were external team members and also worked full time in other companies.

Production Manager

His main duty was the logistics of the different events of the Berlin Music Week. In case an external party was the content provider and promoter of the event, logistics were not the responsibility of the Production Manager. The conference centre Spreespeicher required most of his attention and detail in regard to logistics.

Appendix 2 - Key messages

For the overall internal communications strategy the following key messages were established:

- Coherent internal communication provides a platform to find and share information in a team.
- A sustained internal communications plan and strategy takes a positive impact on the quality of organizational behaviour.
- Communicating with each other is the key to a project's success.

Due to the segmentation of the target audience in separate groups, individual key messages were developed:

Production Team

- The lack of a coherent internal communications strategy has a negative impact on the group dynamics within the production team.
- Using internal communications channels makes it possible for the team to share information.

Project Director

- There is no internal communications plan and strategy for the BMW.
- People get distracted on how to communicate and whether their responsibility area is actually considered important and lose their focus on the final goal.
- Providing transparent communication methods make it possible for the project team to stay focused.

Appendix 3 – Goal and objectives notes

Improve internal communications to ensure individuals in the project have necessary information to make thoughtful decisions.

Objectives

1. Everyone in the production team is aware of the project's mission and vision statement.
2. All team members are familiar with the project's internal communication tools and methods.
3. Communication channels are used in a transparent manner to assure each individual knows the current state of the project on all levels.
4. Providing the possibility for feedback.

Key messages

- Functioning internal communication is crucial for a project's outcome.
- Actively sharing information through provided communication tools and channels is encouraged.
- Misunderstandings are lowered through active dialogue throughout the team.

Tools and tactics

OBJECTIVE #1

- In the beginning of the project a team workshop is provided to introduce the policies and principles to the team. The workshop also functions as

a platform for the team to get to know each other and to learn about the project's team hierarchy and each other's responsibility areas.

- Introduction guidelines including the background of Kulturprojekte Berlin and Berlin Music Week are shared with the team.

- This workshop is aimed to take place once a year at the very beginning of the production phase of the project.

OBJECTIVE #2:

- Communications team prepares handbook with guidelines (possibly based on research results of this thesis) to share with the team.

OBJECTIVE #3:

Meeting protocols

- Protocols of meetings that only the PD and his assistant attended are taken by the assistant and shared with the rest of the team via e-mail.

- Protocols of meetings involving the entire production team are taken by one of the interns and shared with the rest of the team via e-mail.

- All protocols are archived electronically on the company's shared network.

- Team members who are not located in the office facilities of Kulturprojekte Berlin receive a copy of the protocols via e-mail from the assistant of the PD or are informed via phone in case of urgent matters

- All team members are encouraged by the PD to read the minutes of each existing protocol.

Team meetings

- Face-to-face team meetings with the entire production team are held at least once a week to give an update on the current process of the project.

- Each line manager has to provide an update on their responsibility area's developments to the PD once a week.

OBJECTIVE #4:

- Team is encouraged to actively participate in the weekly group meeting's agenda through provided feedback channels.
- PD takes feedback into consideration.
- PD is available for the team.