

## Communication Channels

Channel	At its best	Potential downsides	Think about
<b>Media release</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low/no cost in \$</li> <li>• Stronger more believable message that advertising</li> <li>• Potential to spread</li> <li>• Helps build media relations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Must be a strong story that is newsworthy</li> <li>• You lose control of the message, the final article may also include an opposing view</li> <li>• A good media release takes time and thought</li> <li>• Approvals may take time</li> <li>• Coverage (readership) is difficult to measure</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A media release is an invitation to call. Be prepared for following contact from journalists</li> <li>• Get help with the distribution of the media release</li> <li>• Investing in good photography to accompany the story</li> </ul>
<b>Placed article</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• You control the message</li> <li>• Low/no cost in \$</li> <li>• Stronger more believable message that advertising</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Must be a strong story</li> <li>• A good story takes time and thought</li> <li>• Potential cost of photography</li> <li>• Approvals may take time</li> <li>• Coverage (readership) is difficult to measure</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Investing in good photography to accompany the story</li> <li>• Ensure the article is in the right place for your audience</li> </ul>
<b>Field day/workshop</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More intensive information transfer</li> <li>• Opportunity to customise messages for the audience</li> <li>• Opportunity for two way communication – Q&amp;A sessions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Group dynamics can take over</li> <li>• Usually high cost in time and \$</li> <li>• Limited audience</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider the skills of your event facilitator</li> <li>• Ensure you target the right audience with the right information</li> </ul>
<b>Conferences</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More intensive information transfer</li> <li>• Opportunity to customise messages for the audience</li> <li>• Can be prestigious</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High cost in time and \$</li> <li>• Less opportunity for two way communication</li> <li>• Usually time limited</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider 'rich content', such as images and video to enhance your presentation</li> <li>• Consider your audience – how can they find out more post-conference</li> </ul>
<b>Brochure</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make the project 'seem real'</li> <li>• Information that can be left behind</li> <li>• Key messages to the fore</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited word count (you can't say everything)</li> <li>• Costly in design time and printing costs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Always include further information and contact details</li> <li>• Invest in good imagery</li> <li>• Consider other project partners – what acknowledgement will they require</li> </ul>
<b>Email</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can reach mass audiences fast</li> <li>• Cost effective and simple to use</li> <li>• Consistent and controlled message</li> <li>• Reaches the recipient directly</li> <li>• Good for information, awareness or instruction</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not everyone may have access</li> <li>• Impersonal and open to misinterpretation</li> <li>• Can result quickly in information overload</li> <li>• Can't tell if messages have been read</li> <li>• Doesn't prioritise messages</li> <li>• Can't generate dialogue or discussion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Controlling access to mass distribution lists</li> <li>• Using the subject box to get across your key message</li> <li>• Keeping it short and simple</li> <li>• Using headings and bullet points for key messages and to break up the text</li> </ul>

Channel	At its best	Potential downsides	Think about
<b>Websites/ email newsletter</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fast and consistent</li> <li>• Possibilities are endless – can be entertaining and visually snappy</li> <li>• Good for information store, reference and rising awareness</li> <li>• Noticeboards are good for involvement and discussion</li> <li>• Web stats shows who is reading and how</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not everyone may have good, consistent access</li> <li>• Relies on people seeking out information</li> <li>• Email newsletter distribution relies on up-to-date database</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Including ‘rich content’ to draw people in e.g. great images, videos</li> <li>• Ensure you have an up-to-date database of email addresses</li> </ul>
<b>Video</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creative and entertaining</li> <li>• Can show real people talking about their experiences</li> <li>• Can show a real experience as it happens</li> <li>• The camera never lies – can show proof of progress</li> <li>• Makes people and places accessible for a mass audience</li> <li>• Consistent, controlled message</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potentially expensive if using external expertise</li> <li>• Can be seen as glossy, corporate propaganda</li> <li>• Talking heads alone are rarely engaging</li> <li>• Can look amateur if attempted yourself</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do you have the right equipment, software and expertise to film and edit yourself</li> <li>• Do you need professional help?</li> </ul>
<b>Text message</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good for reaching remote audiences</li> <li>• Good for alert or crisis communication</li> <li>• Can be used to direct people to further sources of information</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Will annoy people quickly if overused</li> <li>• Relies on an up-to-date database</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure you have access to an up-to-date database of numbers</li> </ul>
<b>Webinars</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opportunity for science experts to reach a mass/engaged audiences with a consistent message in real time</li> <li>• Opportunity for two-way conversation – Q&amp;A sessions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• May be expensive</li> <li>• Need the right technology in place on both sides</li> <li>• Location needs to be considered (noise levels)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Find out about new technology continually emerging in this area</li> </ul>