



# Reduce, Recycle, Reuse

An Efficient Approach to Communications  
Planning

Presented by Dawn Crawford

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# ROAD MAP



## REDUCE

REDUCE THE TIME AND  
EFFORT SPENT ON  
PLANNING



## RECYCLE

FIND NEW WAYS TO MAKE  
YOUR CONTENT FEEL FRESH



## REUSE

HOW OFTEN CAN YOU  
SALVAGE YOUR CONTENT?



## BUILD

WHEN IT'S TIME TO MAKE  
SOMETHING NEW



## WORKSHEET EXPLORATION

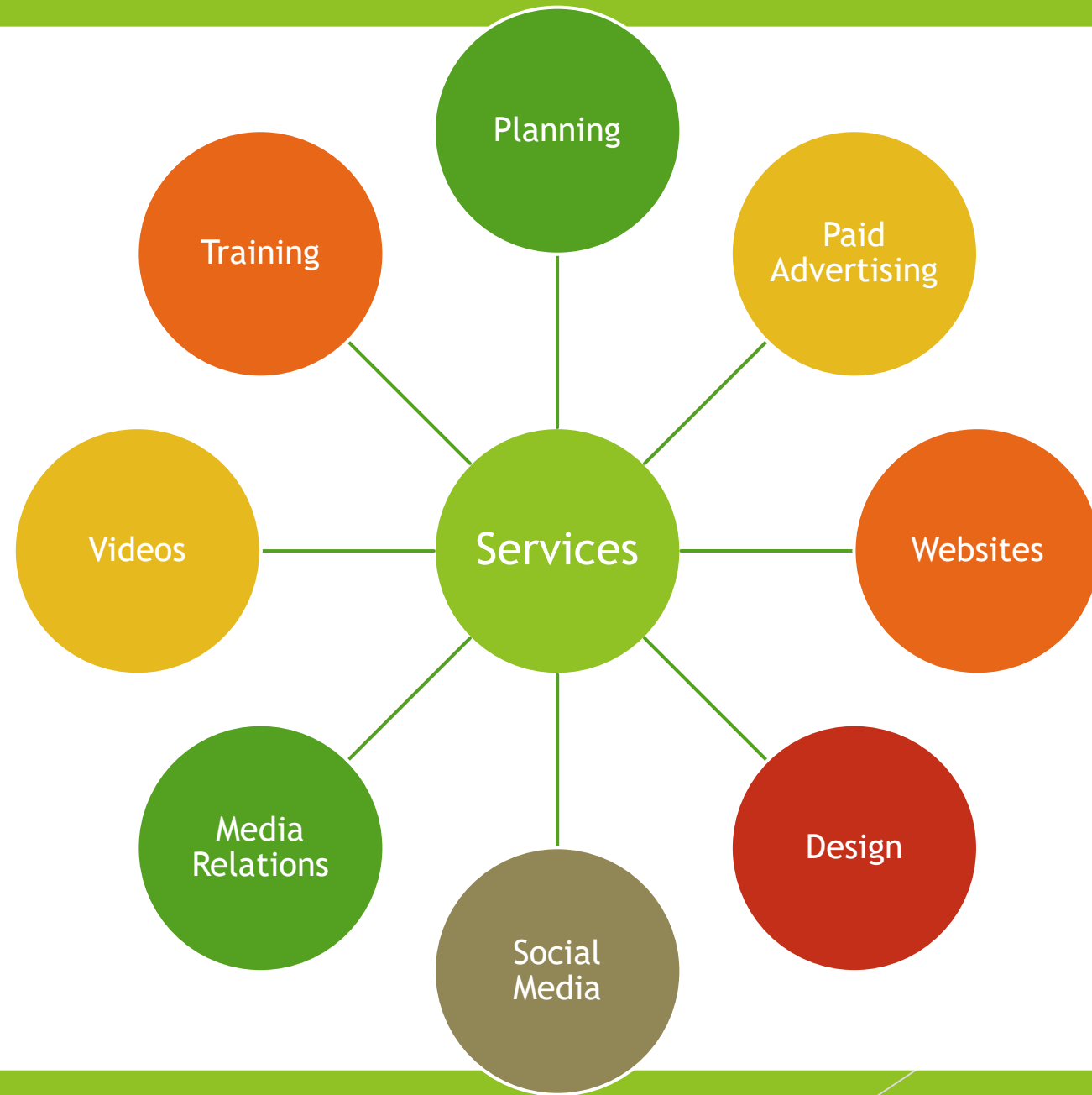


## QUESTIONS

# Dawn Crawford, BC/DC Ideas

- Full-service communications agency that works exclusively with nonprofits across the country
- **20+ years** of dedicated nonprofit experience paired with **10+ years** of corporate advertising experience
- [bcdcideas.com](http://bcdcideas.com) or [@bcdcideas](https://twitter.com/bcdcideas)





We are the Communications Department for  
several nonprofits.

We've had to create an efficient, effective  
approach to communications production.

These are our tricks.

# Plan vs Strategy



**Plan** is the PATH to  
get the work done

Tactics  
Daily Work



**Strategy** sets the  
TONE for how the  
organization  
communicates

Brand  
Tone  
Voice  
Key Messages

# WORKS FOR PROJECT PLANS TOO

Using this same method for project plans will save you time and keep your efficiencies moving forward

REDUCE







REDUCE your time  
spent on planning



Who is guilty of skipping  
the planning process  
completely?

Procrastination only brings  
mistakes & inefficient work

# REDUCE THE TIME YOU SPEND PLANNING

- ▶ Taking time to make an annual plan will **SAVE** you time in the long run
- ▶ It takes **8 hours** to make an annual plan
  - ▶ 3-4 hours for a brainstorm or research with your team
  - ▶ 3-4 hours writing your plan
  - ▶ 1-2 hours finalizing your plan with leadership



**SAY  
WHAT?!**

# HOW ANNUAL PLANS REDUCE TIME



Ideation take time



1-2 hours every month = 12-24 hours a YEAR planning



3 hours each quarter = 8-12 hours a YEAR

# ANNUAL PLANS



Include anniversaries and observations



Get ahead of important events



Make a monthly theme to inspire you later



Identify rough patches that might need more time or more resources



Assign others to help you

## BEST TIME OF YEAR TO PLAN

2 months ahead of the end of your fiscal cycle

- July Fiscal Start >> May Planning
- January Fiscal Start >> November Planning

# HOW TO FIND THE TIME



Tell your boss this is important and efficient



Take yourself on a retreat



Do it with a team



Prioritize your future sanity



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It's a plan to make a plan

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Don't get too detailed

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Think of it as a map - plot milestones to do work

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You'll be reviewing every month!

# Get Yourself An Assistant



- ▶ Get a project management system
- ▶ Task your future self to do this work
- ▶ Focus on doing the work, not thinking about the work
- ▶ Delegate where you can
- ▶ Your future self will thank you

# MOST IMPORTANT ASPECT OF PLANNING

## Complete Your Plan

# RECYCLE





Now that you've found the time to plan,  
what do you put in there?



Look for opportunities to RECYCLE what you  
have already created



RECYCLE your work to  
better serve your  
mission



Reduces review time &  
the internet likes it

# BE LESS OBSESSED WITH NEW


- ▶ Repackage existing content into something “new” for your audiences
- ▶ Create landing pages for reoccurring communications events
  - ▶ Put all your past content there. Add 1 annual post, if you must.



# EXAMPLE Property Highlights

- ▶ Going “Back to Basics”
- ▶ Reusing image and description of a property from the website
- ▶ Minimal review, fast content



The background features a series of overlapping, semi-transparent green triangles and polygons that create a dynamic, layered effect. The colors range from a light, pale green to a deep, forest green. The shapes are primarily oriented diagonally, creating a sense of movement and depth. The overall composition is modern and minimalist.

New is not  
always the  
answer

# REFRESH YOUR CONTENT

- ▶ Chop up old videos to short social media clips and reels
- ▶ Organize photos so you can reinvent their purpose
- ▶ Change the color, not the design, of materials

REUSE





You've RECYCLED some things. Good job!



Now look for opportunities to be lazy and just REUSE something



You are sitting on a gold  
mine of content that  
deserves attention



No one is counting  
the times you use  
something

# FIND NEW WAYS TO MAKE YOUR CONTENT FEEL FRESH



You have already created tons of beautiful content

Articles  
Newsletters  
Photos



Most has not received the attention it deserves



Freshen the content and REUSE that work



# HOW TO BE LAZY

## Repost

- Repost content posted by your fans

## Delegate

- Create a culture of content creators on your team to make things for you

## Copy/Paste

- Reuse successful email content

## Reuse

- Build a “Brand” around an annual event/fundraiser

# GIVING TUESDAY IS HERE!

Your donation is  
**TRIPLE MATCHED** today!

**November 30, 2021**



## EXAMPLE Rocket Cats

- ▶ Annual conversation of IF we should change them
- ▶ We have had the exact same visual theme and ask for Giving Tuesday for since 2016
- ▶ Changed the color once, made them move
- ▶ Raised more money EVERY YEAR since we used this “brand”

## SAD TRUTH

About **10% of people**  
notice when you are  
clever or new



Good communications isn't  
about new or novel or  
clever

It's about meeting your  
goals

It's *MORE* clever to efficiently  
use your organization's resources

# BUILD





Now that you've RECYCLED and REUSED  
your good communications



Focus on filling the gaps by BUILDING  
something new





# Save Your Resources

- ▶ Dream big on what to do with the few new projects
- ▶ Invest your precious time and creativity on projects to meet your mission
- ▶ Have ideas of how you can reuse this in the future built in



If it's not broken,  
don't fix it

Your Plan can be used  
AGAIN and  
AGAIN and  
AGAIN and  
AGAIN and  
AGAIN...

# WORKSHEET



## WORKSHEET LINK

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1pyb5tq2mFV0Az8tjtiQpCMHTju74Y0AaxBJmlecFTxo/edit?usp=sharing>



# Questions

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