



Resource Center for Parents of children with special needs
Outreach and Communications Program

Sawyer•Finn
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INTRODUCTION: *BRAKING THE SILENCE*

*“Let’s stop talking about their disabilities,
and start talking about their abilities..”*

INTRODUCTION:

Political, Economic, Social and Technological overview

The Macedonian society is best described as a state in permanent crisis. Over the past 20 odd years of independence our country has not enjoyed a decent spell of undisturbed development, be it social, political or economical. The factors have been different in nature and magnitude, from terribly managed transformation of state into private capital at the beginning of the 90-ies, economic embargoes, civil war in 2001 to today's huge political dispute between the government and the opposition.. All of this has resulted in a highly skeptical and very distrusting population, consumed by the issues of basic economic survival and a general disinterest in anything past providing to the basic needs of the individual or the family.

And the starting ground for development was not exactly ideal to begin with. Although literacy is at an acceptable level (almost always over 95%), huge portion of this falls into the basic reading/writing category, so critical thinking and intellectual potency of the general population still remain below par when compared to developed democracies. In such circumstances, medieval taboos, provincial mentality patterns and social exclusion for anything and anybody even slightly outside the stereotype is alive and well, and represents more of the public opinion than normally expected.

There have been a few beacons of hope and social breakthroughs that we have witnessed, but few have made a permanent change to society. However, the foot in the door has been set, and now it's only a matter of enduring long enough for change to take place. We have to rely on the new generations to take on the ideas and becoming the champions of the cause themselves, as they have proven themselves ready to make their own society better and able to confront the stereotypes with new world views. This has been a result of exposure to online media and generally the new ways of interaction with the world as part of growing up. They, maybe for a first generation in a while, want to know what is possible, and what they can do, and refuse the limits imposed by a tired and frustrated older generation..

And this is our chance...

INTRODUCTION:

Our issues versus Their beliefs

So, how do we act in a society that is still struggling to enter its own Age of Enlightenment? The simple answer is: By becoming part of the movement ourselves, pushing from within for the change to happen. Be part of the New Wave. Join the fight...

The practical answer would be: No to all of the above. And ultimately that would be the realistic answer. And the grounds for a doable strategy as opposed to romantic idealism, a trap so appealing that has been the black hole of most efforts to change minds in this country.

The right thing to do is grow as fast as one can, institutionalizing our organization to the highest possible level. Both internally and as far the public image is concerned. If you appear Big, you differentiate, if you differentiate you get noticed. And while in the process, be as quite as you can. Get the job done. Connect peer groups and institutions, establish yourselves firmly to small interest circles first without causing too much fuss. Be simple. The public will not pay attention and hear what you have to say if you become perceived as “just another” NGO that does “something” to help “someone” and is “here today, gone tomorrow” as there have been so many of those, unclear in their goals, to narrow in their operations or too big in their expectations, that the public attention has worn out. They simply don’t want to know. They are too many, and “I have other problems to take care of.”

So don’t try to persuade by being patronizing. Say what you have to say and don’t push it. But say it often enough to make it ring in the ears. Say it well enough. Say it simple enough so that everyone can understand immediately. Make yourself visible, but don’t throw yourself out there. We are not in the process of selling a product, but of establishing an idea.

The idea that everyone has a chance.

And we need to remind, not educate people, of this simple truth. In their hearts and their minds.

**WHO WE ARE:
HONEST AND
DETERMINED**

*“You can’t give a chance to someone.
It was theirs in the first place”*

WHO ARE WE:

Honest and determined

A solid brand, or more, a solid idea behind any organization is key to a successful development and acceptance in the public. It is really the truth about who we are - well told. Some call it Mission, coupled with a Vision, but more often than not organizations find it really difficult to bridge the gap between with what they mean and what they say when it comes to public communications.

What does a solid idea mean? Simply, a clear statement about who you are, why you exist and how you are going to change things. When all techno-lingua is said and done, everything can be stripped down to the bare essentials, three crucial truths you need really good and, most of all, truthful answers to.

1. THE ORGANIZATION MUST **LEAD** IN ORDER TO BE NOTICED
2. THE ORGANIZATION MUST **DIFFERENTIATE** IN ORDER TO BE REMEMBERED
3. THE ORGANIZATION MUST **DELIVER ON ITS PROMISE** IN ORDER TO BE CHOSEN/TRUSTED

It is the basic communication model in action. We must lead, differentiate and deliver in order to be noticed, remembered and chosen. We need to do the first three well in order to expect a reaction, and a good one, from the public.

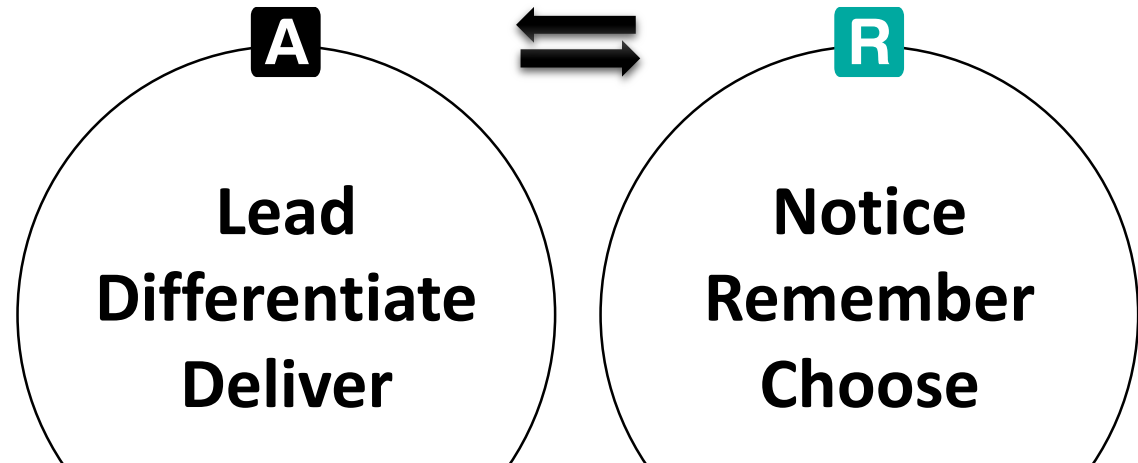
And please don't overpromise.

So here it is in pictures

WHO ARE WE:

Honest and determined

3sT



A Action
R Reaction



WHO ARE WE:

Honest and determined



Lead

The Resource Center for Parents of children with special needs is the first national establishment of it's kind in Macedonia thus filling a long standing hole in the social/ healthcare system

Differentiate

The Resource center is focused solely on supporting parents and families with relevant information, guidance, contacts and any form of advice and is cost free.

Deliver

The Resource center is ran by parents of children with special needs who have relevant first hand experience in dealing with this kind of situations and will go through thick and thin together with you.

WHO ARE WE:

Honest and determined



Our Story

The Resource Center for Parents of children with special needs is the first national establishment of it's kind in Macedonia thus filling a long standing hole in the social/ healthcare system. We specialize in supporting parents and families of these children with relevant information, guidance, contacts and any form of advice and all of that free of any charges. We are also parents of children with special needs and have relevant first hand experience in dealing with this kind of situations and will go through thick and thin together with you.

WHO ARE WE:

Honest and determined

So, who are we?

We are a very important organization fulfilling a hole in the system and society that needed to be mended a long time ago. But we are here now, brought together by the love we have for our offspring, the determination and willingness to stand firm even when others don't or can't or won't, to help and act against the tide of despair we know so well, to give strength and be strong for everyone that needs it and at the end see miracles happen. No matter how small they may seem.

And we want people to know this.

We start from the ground up.

**AUDIENCES:
SEGMENTING
AND UNDERSTANDING**

*“Sometimes a whisper is more
powerful than a roar”*



AUDIENCES:

Segmenting and understanding

We need to reach the people in need. We need to tell them our story. And we want others to hear.

We have three major types of audiences that we need to communicate to.

First, our primary audience, the parents of children with special needs.

Second, the professionals whose work and expertise encompasses children with special needs.

Third, the general public.

Winning hearts and minds in all cases.

Because it is still early in the process to be talking about mass media awareness campaigns, we will focus on establishing practices to reach out and communicate with the primary and secondary target group. The success of this stage of our introduction will determine the need or lack thereof of further communication efforts on a grander scale.

Let's start with the parents.

AUDIENCES:

Segmenting and understanding

AUDIENCE

Parents of children with special needs

SUBSEGMENTATION

Parents of newborns with a diagnose

Parents of newborns without a diagnose but under consideration

Parents of preschool children with a diagnose and in treatment

Parents of preschool children without diagnose and treatment

COMMUNICATION GOALS

Building awareness and trust, raising interest and inciting action

HOW DO WE REACH THEM?

Disseminating information about the Resource Center through posters, flyers and cards in all touch-points (maternity wards, pediatricians, general practitioners, primary healthcare pro's, psychologists and defectologists at kindergartens and schools)

KEY MESSAGE

There is such a thing as a Parent Resource Center that can help you with any questions you may have
They were in the same position you are in now and can really make a difference with information and advice

AUDIENCES:

Segmenting and understanding

AUDIENCE

Professionals whose work and expertise encompasses children with special needs

SUBSEGMENTATION

Gynecologists

Pediatricians

Primary healthcare pro's

Kindergarten staff

Primary school staff

COMMUNICATION GOALS

Building awareness, recruiting, coaching, networking

HOW DO WE REACH THEM?

One on one contacts, On-site and off-site training, Disseminating information about the Resource Center through posters, flyers and cards

KEY MESSAGE

There is such a thing as a Parent Resource Center that can help you with any questions you may have

You can advance your professional knowledge by working with us

**MESSAGES:
*FROM THE HEART***



“The truth well told”

MESSAGES:

From the heart

YOU WOULD DO ANYTHING FOR THEM, AND WE WOULD DO ANYTHING FOR YOU.

This slogan is the focal point of all previous elaborations, in line with both emotional and rational resonance we want to reach our audiences. The wording is simple, we play on an emotional transfer, saying that we feel for the parents as strongly as they feel for their children in need. It is a mixture of feelings that can hardly be articulated in words, so a simple “You for them, and we for you.” gains lots of emotional power, without seeming patronizing and imposed.

WE KNOW WHAT YOU ARE GOING THROUGH.

WE KNOW, BECAUSE WE HAVE BEEN THROUGH THE SAME.

IT’S A HARD ROAD AND THERE ARE NO SIMPLE SOLUTIONS. BUT THERE IS MORE HELP AND SUPPORT THAN YOU CAN IMAGINE.

THE RESOURCE CENTER FOR PARENTS OF CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS IS HERE FOR YOU.

The copy in support of the slogan is also in line with all requirements. Short, warm and memorable, but most of all – honest and inviting. We try to address people at the worst of times, but it is also the time when we are most needed. We share their pain, and say there is a way, and we know because we have walked the walk all too well.

MESSAGES:

From the heart

As far as the color code and the images we use are concerned, we really should avoid all the communication traps and have in mind the visual quality of materials usually found in the same places we want to get people's attention at.

We should avoid being whimsical or overly dramatic at all cost, and evoke trust, calmness and a glimpse into future happiness.

So we use imposed blue over artistic style black and white photographs, highlighting the moment of emotional transfer between the parent and child (kiss, hug, working together). We do this in order to support the slogan visually and add to the power of the message, inciting emotions that are past the language barrier.

Examples for poster, flyer and card on following pages.




РЕСУРСЕН ЦЕНТАР
на родители на деца
со посебни потреби

**ВИЕ БИ НАПРАВИЛЕ СÈ ЗА НИВ,
А НИЕ СÈ ЗА ВАС!**

Знаеме точно низ што поминувате.
Знаеме, затоа што и ние сме минале низ истото.
Патот е тежок и не постојат едноставни решенија.
Но, затоа постои повеќе поддршка и помош отколку што мислите.
Ресурсниот центар на родители на деца со посебни потреби
ви стои на располагање.

078 449 852 resursen.centar@yahoo.com www.resursencentar.mk



ВМЕ БИ НАПРАВИЛЕ СЕ ЗА НИБ,
А НИЕ СЕ ЗА ВАС!

078 449 852
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www.resursen.centar.mk

ЦСРКРЕННИТ
за ресурси на деца
со инвалидитет



COMMUNICATION GOALS

*“Plans are nothing, planning
is everything”*

COMMUNICATION GOALS:

The key communication objectives are based around building the grounds for future mass communication campaign. It has to be seen as the starting step towards establishing communication channels that in the future will support the most important mechanisms of exchanging information with the most concerned of our target groups: parents and professionals. We strongly suggest that working on the underlined objectives simultaneously will maximize efficiency and cut time needed, having in mind the nature of communication obstacles that can and probably will occur as elaborated in the introduction.

BUILDING ATTENTION AND VISIBILITY

First and foremost – we have to make our existence seen and known. We must disseminate our marketing materials making sure we are present across all touch-points, no matter of the level of importance. The primary tool to build an image of a “national institution”.

INITIATING ACTION

Our work has little to no substitute in terms of nature of service offered, so our main focus will be to allow easy access for all concerned. That means keeping all means to get in touch open for people, regardless of their level of education, technological proficiency or need for privacy.

RELATION BUILDING

Involving professionals with our work may require more organized effort than expected, but it is of utmost importance to win them over and transform them into champions of our cause. Usually inert, the older, established generation may be less significant to us than the up and coming specialists. Also, networking and support from international organizations adds to our credibility.

PR BUZZ CREATING

Or establishing relations with people in as many local and national media as possible that can help spread our messages and give voice to our efforts.

COMMUNICATION GOALS – project level:

BUILDING ATTENTION AND VISIBILITY

Visibility Goal 1: Disseminating materials at all maternity wards

Visibility Goal 2: Disseminating materials at all pediatricians / general practitioners offices

Visibility Goal 3: Disseminating materials at all defectologists / psychologists in kindergartens

Visibility Goal 4: Disseminating materials at all defectologists / psychologists in primary schools

INITIATING ACTION

Action Goal 1: Allowing easy access to information and advice to our target groups (phone, e-mail, mail, social media, walk in)

Action Goal 2: Influence thought and incite action through advertising messages (slogan and marketing copy)

RELATION BUILDING

Relation Building Goal 1: Networking with domestic institutions of interest

Relation Building Goal 2: Networking with international institutions of interest

Relation Building Goal 3: Detecting of and building a network of relevant professionals in the educational system

Relation Building Goal 4: Detecting of and building a network of relevant professionals in the medical system

PR BUZZ CREATING

PR Goal 1: Establishing a network of contacts in the local and national media

THANK YOU

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