



Strategic Communications Plan Update

Center for Strategic Relations

July 2020



Overview

- ARC is partnering with HL Strategy to develop a strategic communications plan for 2020-2025 to support and amplify the programs, projects and products of the ARC for the benefit of metro Atlanta.
- The plan aims to help ARC improve its reach and reputation as an audience-advocate through communications that are centered on agency-wide disciplines and distributed strategically and efficiently.



Strategic Communications Goals

- Position ARC as the region's most trusted source for data, tools and resources to address ongoing community needs and long-term, cross-disciplinary planning across metro Atlanta.
- Leverage audience-centric communications to connect key groups with each other and with the wide range of ARC's expertise in pursuit of the goals and outcomes of the ARC's Regional Plan.



ARC

Planning Process

- ✓ **Research Review:** manager's listening tour, ARC Board survey, and staff survey; strategic communications research; communications audit
- ✓ **Audience Evaluation:** a snapshot of current ARC activities aligned to key audiences
- ✓ **Communications Alignment Tool:** looking at communications tactics and audiences to track goal alignment and agency spend on time, budget and resources
- ✓ **External Stakeholder Analysis:** online survey and phone interviews to capture stakeholder experiences and perceptions of the ARC and our communications
- **Objectives, Strategies and Tactics:** develop a five-year plan that is measurable and positions ARC for success
- **Evaluation:** ongoing evaluation and assessment of the plan



Audience Evaluation

	AUDIENCES						Other
	Leadership	Partners/Agencies/N	Community	Internal	Members	Educators	
Sponsorship & Events							
State of the Region Breakfast	X	X	X	X	X	X	
TARP/RTP outreach	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Connect ATL Summit (CLC)	X	X	X				
Water Drop Dash (Fix A Leak Week) (CLC)					X		
Empowerline Health Forums (CCS)		X			X		
Civic Dinners	X	X	X				
Workforce Luncheon	X	X	X				
Metro Atlanta Speaks	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Executive Roundtables (for ARC Annual Partners)		X					
Legislative Briefing Session	X	X	X				
UASI Immersion Training sessions (collaboration with local governments/agencies)	X						
Transportation Demand Management (TDM) forum - GCO		X	X				
Online Assets (websites, blogs)							
What's Next ATL blog		X	X		X		
What's Next ATL podcast		X	X		X		
ARC	X	X	X		X	X	
33n.atlantaregional.com		X				X	Data specialists
tsarchitecture.atlantaregional.org	X						
waterdropdash.org	X	X			X		
northgeorgiawater.org	X	X			X		
cleanwatercampaign.org		X			X		
mydropcounts.org					X		
mwdkidsclub.org					X	X	
empowerline.org (CCS)		X			X		
atlworks.org (CCS)			X		X		
neighborhoodnexus.org	X	X	X				
metroathousing.org	X	X	X				
gacommuteoptions.com			X		X		
atlantaregionsplan.org	X	X	X	X	X	X	
atltransformationalliance.org	X	X	X		X		
opendata.atlantaregional.com		X					Data specialists

Communications Alignment Tool

ARC Communications Alignment Tool

Product Description: (Ex.: Green Matters or What's Next ATL podcast) _____

Scope (single event or episode vs. ongoing monthly) _____

	Check
Goals	
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Leverage audience-centric communications to connect key groups with each other and with the wide range of ARC's expertise in pursuit of the goals and outcomes of the ARC's Regional Plan.	
Strategies	
Raises awareness of ARC	
Leverages or informs influencers	
Secures a 'seat at the table'	
Highlights ARC data, tools & resources	
Cross-disciplinary	
Addresses audience interest/need	
Promotes ARC expertise	
Aligned with specific goal/outcome in the regional plan	
Audience(s)	
Government leadership	
Strategic partners/agencies/NGOs	



Stakeholder Interviews

Community
Housing
Trusted
Respected
Transportation
Conveners
Leadership
Collaborative Balanced
Data Equity Facilitators
Workforce
Abundance

15

stakeholder interviews
from public, private
and non-profit sectors

ARC

Stakeholder Questions

1. How would you describe ARC in 2-3 words? Follow up: Why did you choose [one of those words]?
2. How would you characterize ARC's reputation, and how does that compare with your perception?
3. What do you see as ARC's strengths? What could the agency be doing a better job of? How would you describe ARC's evolution over the years, and how do you think ARC needs to evolve in the coming years?
4. Does the communications you receive about ARC (e-newsletter, live event, website, social media etc), reflect the agency's mission? Why or why not?



Stakeholder Interviews

TRUSTED DATA SOURCE

"If I need solid data in the metro Atlanta region, ARC is my source."

EXPANDED PORTFOLIO

"ARC is very busy boiling the ocean, so it can be hard to explain and even remember when to turn to ARC."

"I believe we are in an information overload."

BALANCING ACT

"ARC gets tagged with the perception of City of Atlanta vs. rest of region"

"Be clear on what success looks like - for the agency and the region - realizing those are two different things."

Stakeholder Interviews

RESPECTED REGIONAL LEADERSHIP

"The region's largest marketing and advocacy organization, arguably in the South"

"In many ways, ARC is like a best kept secret."

"...famous for fostering community conversations..."

"...unique market position..."

Stellar organizational leadership mentioned in almost every interviews.



Next Steps

- Create strategies, tactics and measurable objectives per audience.
- Develop an agency-wide message architecture to enable consistent, compelling and comprehensive communications about ARC.
- Late Summer: Target date for a full draft of the plan.

WHAT'S
NEXT



ARC

Timeline

