

Case Study – COMMUNICATION SUPPORT SERVICES

Rural Councils Victoria

Oct 2011 to Jun 2015

The Client

Rural Councils Victoria (RCV) is the network of Victoria's 38 rural councils. RCV delivers a program to assist the member councils with the mutual challenges they face in such areas as economic development, planning, policy, research and training.

“I am very impressed with Birgit’s proactive approach and focus on keeping in touch with me, particularly as she works remotely. Birgit has a broad range of skills and is highly organised.

The benefit for me is stress-free, high quality and timely support.”

Olwyn Redshaw,
Program and Policy Manager

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The Challenge

The communication challenge for RCV was to engage its members to ensure they provide input into shaping the projects and running pilot projects, at the same time as raising awareness of RCV and its work more broadly throughout Victoria.

Our Approach

Fishbowl PR started working with RCV in the first year of its four year funded program, known as the Networked Rural Councils Program. The initial approach was to build the engagement of member councils through a single source of information, the e-newsletter, backed up by resources on the RCV website.

Engagement figures increased as the program gained momentum which resulted in high levels of involvement by councils in training and other opportunities.

As the number of projects increased and events were rolled out, Fishbowl PR provided strategic advice, developed and implemented communication plans for the individual projects using traditional and digital communication tools, including social media.

Fishbowl PR maintained the RCV website, which had been established as the repository of all program information, including tool kits and resources, updates on planned events and providing links to sign up for training programs.

Fishbowl PR also researched and prepared RCV's 2013 State Government Budget submission and worked with the RCV Program and Policy Manager to build relationships with key stakeholders.

The Results

An engaged membership and robust development of projects created genuine interest among members. This was measured through use of the tools on the RCV website and attendance at events and training.

Awareness of RCV, its focus and its work also improved more broadly. The result is that in the second year of the program RCV enjoyed wider media interest and began to be seen as a reference point for media inquiries on all things rural. This included coverage in The Age, The Weekly Times and more extensively across regional and rural media. This was measured through media coverage content analysis which showed an increase in media coverage, a highly positive tone and quality coverage.

The Victorian government, which funds the Networked Rural Councils Program, launched project outcomes and also promoted RCV's work.