* This Communication and Education guide will help you to develop effective strategies to raise awareness of your zero waste initiatives before, during and after your event.
* It presents some of the key communication and education considerations for any event, as well as suggestions that could help to promote your key messages.
* You can use the template provided at the end to help you plan specific communication and education strategies for your event.

Guide

### Planning

Why do you need a plan?

Effective communication and education play an important role in creating a zero waste event. If people are aware of and understand what your event is trying to achieve, they will be more likely to take action.

top tip

* Work on your Communication and Education Plan as soon as you start planning your event. This will help you identify and maximise the opportunities to raise awareness of your zero waste initiatives and educate your audience on how they can contribute to your goals.

The more effort you put into your communication and education around zero waste for your event, the better the final outcome will be. While every event is different, there are aspects of this plan that will be relevant to any event format. Some key considerations to think about when getting started are listed below.

Who are your target audiences?

While you may think patrons are your only target audience, your Communication and Education Plan should be used to target a range of key stakeholders. They include:

* Patrons and the public from different backgrounds and of different ages
* Event staff and volunteers
* Stallholders (particularly food and drink stalls)
* Contractors (including waste collection, cleaning, construction, sound and staging)
* Sponsors and supporters (including local councils and organisations)
* Media organisations.

What is your event trying to achieve?

Take some time to think about the zero waste goals and targets you are trying to achieve. This will help to develop your key messaging for the event.

* What waste issue/s are you trying to avoid?
* What are your goals for waste management?
* What are your specific targets? How much waste will be diverted from landfill?
* What is interesting or different about your zero waste initiatives?
* How will waste that is diverted from landfill be managed?
* What situations could be avoided through your zero waste initiatives?

What are your key messages?

Develop three to five key messages that can be used throughout your event. They should be short, simple and easy to understand, and overall, highlight the main goals you are trying to achieve. It is important to incorporate these messages in all communications activities before, during and after your event. Ensure to make them relevant to children and those who do not have English as a first language, if attending.

Think of key words or phrases to describe your event and initiatives, which could be incorporated into your messaging or used as a catchphrase for promotion. Examples include:

* Zero waste
* Waste free
* Going green
* Reduce, reuse, recycle
* Using emotive language that links to community values around sustainability and the environment.

Examples of key messages include:

* Help us [achieve goal] at [name of event]
* We’re doing our bit for the environment by [insert goal]
* Make a difference at [name of event] by [insert goal]
* Did you know… [share key statistics or information about your goal]

tip

* Some key messages may need to be slightly different to suit each of your target audiences.
* Did you know that the fee you are paying covers waste management? Reducing waste is a win-win for all of us and the environment.

What communications channels could you use?

Think about some of the available platforms you could use for communication and education around your event. Think about the target audience and how to best reach them. Think about who could amplify your message. Some examples include:

* Event website
* Event social media profiles (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube etc)
* Flyers and posters (recyclable)
* Media and advertising
* Word of mouth.

What will your event look like?

Think about the type, size and duration of your event to help identify the main opportunities and limitations for communication and education strategies.

* **Event type:** What type of crowd are you expecting? What are the age groups and other key demographics? What communications activities are likely to be well received?
* **Event size:** Is it more effective to focus on one or two targeted activities for a smaller event with limited resources. Alternatively, can you allocate a budget for communication and education strategies at a larger event with additional resourcing?
* **Event duration:** How long will your event run for and where are the best communication and education opportunities in terms of timing?

### Tasks before the event

This is an important step in your Communication and Education Plan, as planning before the event will set the framework to help you get the best results from your zero waste initiatives. Below are some specific strategies you can use in your communications efforts to target different audiences before the event.

For all audiences,think about ‘what is in it for them, why should they care?’

| target audience | strategies |
| --- | --- |
| **Patrons and the general public** | * + How are you promoting your event to patrons? Include information on your zero waste initiatives alongside general information on your event. This could be a message on the event poster or a dedicated section on your website.
	+ Explain how patrons can help you achieve your zero waste goals. What can they bring with them to your event and what services will you have available?
	+ Share your specific goals and targets for your zero waste initiatives when promoting your event.
	+ Generate some excitement and let your patrons know they can be part of a great new initiative to protect the environment.
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| **Event staff and volunteers** | * + Collaboration is key when it comes to your staff and volunteers. Effective communication and education will help you engage your staff and volunteers and manage their expectations.
	+ Invite your core staff to get involved in the planning stages of your event. This will help them to better understand your strategies and take any necessary action in the planning stage.
	+ Staff and volunteers must understand your zero waste goals and targets and the waste streams in place for the event. Incorporate this information into staff and volunteer briefings or inductions. Develop a summary of the benefits and outcomes being sought, how waste to landfill will be reduced, what will happen to waste instead of going to landfill and checklists to follow.
	+ Develop posters and signage that will help your staff and volunteers understand how to use your waste streams.
	+ Allocate a key representative to answer staff and volunteer questions about your zero waste initiatives.
	+ Recruit staff or volunteers with experience in communications who could support event promotion and messaging.
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| **Stallholders** | * + Encourage potential stallholders to join you in the planning stage. Outline your waste objectives and ask them for ideas or ways to reduce waste at their stalls. *Ensure you invite them to contribute their ideas for waste reduction for all stages of the event – set-up, service and pack-up*
	+ Create and distribute a stallholder covenant plan that outlines what packaging/ servicing vessels, in-stall waste infrastructure and food and beverage menu requirements your event requires.
	+ Provide potential stallholders with an information package prior to event registration (this could be downloadable and include a video message) that includes available waste streams and how they can comply with any restrictions you have set on packaging etc. to meet the event targets.
	+ Incorporate stallholder initiatives for zero waste in your event promotion.
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| **Venue owners and contractors** | * + Encourage venue owners and contractors to join you in the planning stage.
	+ Outline your waste objectives and ask them for ideas or ways to reduce waste.
	+ Make sure you highlight your plans for the entirety of the event: before, during and after.
	+ Encourage venue owners to see waste minimisation as something valuable, both economically and environmentally. What options do they have in place and is there an incentive to broaden this to cater to your needs?
	+ If using a tender process, specifically request information about what zero waste plans you want from a contractor and the methods they can take to achieve this.
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| **Sponsors and supporters** | * + Outline your specific zero waste goals and targets, and share information on your zero waste initiatives and how they will divert waste from landfill. This could open up the opportunity for sponsors and supporters to supply branded alternatives for your waste streams, such as reusable cups.
	+ Ask your sponsors and supporters to share the message and promote your plans through their networks.
	+ Look for any opportunities to involve a high profile spokesperson to act as a zero waste champion for your event.
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| **Media organisations** | * + In preparation for engaging with the media, it is essential to identify the unique aspects of your event that distinguish it from others. This will enable you to develop a compelling "angle" that captures the attention of journalists.
	+ What is new, innovative, and exciting about your zero waste plans?
	+ Develop a media release to be sent to relevant media outlets in the week leading up to your event. Share your goals, targets and zero waste initiatives.
	+ If you don’t have the time or resources to develop a media release, call or email your local newspaper or radio station to tell them about the zero waste plans for your event. Invite them to attend the event and offer to supply photos or people to interview, or an area to broadcast their program live.
	+ If you have the budget, consider advertising in local media outlets to further promote your key messages.
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### Tasks during the event

There are many opportunities to promote and raise awareness of zero waste initiatives during your event.

**Visual cues**

* Include signage, posters or messages on television screens that are easy to read and visible in high foot traffic areas.
* Make it easy for patrons and stallholders to use your waste streams as this will help to change their behaviour.
* Make sure each stall and food outlet have a ‘zero waste event’ sign, volunteer and other staff could wear vests with the zero-waste messaging printed on the back.

**Spread the word**

* Include event staff and volunteers at bin hubs and other zero waste services to help educate patrons on how they can use the services properly. Rotate the staff and volunteers to add variety to their duties and keep them engaged.
* Encourage staff, volunteers, and stallholders to share the message about zero waste initiatives with patrons on the ground.
* Speak to patrons and stallholders as much as possible to gather feedback. Make notes on areas for improvement or what is working well.

**Real-time updates**

* Post real-time updates on social media – how are your zero waste initiatives tracking? Include photos of patrons using your bin hubs, reusable crockery and cutlery, rinse stations etc.

tip

* Take plenty of photos and videos of good and bad behaviour. This will come in handy when sharing results or promoting future events.
* Schedule announcements for an MC to let patrons know about your zero waste event.

### Tasks after the event

Although your event may conclude, it is crucial to understand that your Communication and Education Plan should continue beyond that point. Follow these essential steps after the event:

* 1. **Clean-up communication:** Reiterate your zero waste services to stallholders, staff, volunteers, and contractors as they pack down after the event. This is an important step in the waste management process to help close the loop on your initiatives.
	2. **Evaluate and debrief:** Review your event as per your plan to gather statistics about your zero waste efforts and whether your goals and targets were achieved. Talk to your staff, volunteers, stallholders and contractors and write down what communications and education techniques worked well, what didn’t, and what could be improved next time.
	3. **Collate your findings:** What were the key results, statistics, and achievements from your zero waste initiatives? What happened to the waste streams that were diverted from landfill?
	4. **Share the message:** It is important to share the results of your zero waste initiatives, otherwise all of your efforts will have gone to waste (pardon the pun). If you have access to patrons’ contact details, send them a message to thank them for their attendance and how they helped to achieve your goals and targets. Let
	them know how much waste was diverted from landfill and how it was managed. Use your website and social media channels to spread the word and contact media organisations to share the results.
	5. **Time to celebrate:** It’s important to celebrate your achievements and let your target audiences know that you appreciate their support and that they played a key role in your achievements.

top 5 tips for social media

1. Include images or videos with your posts
2. Try to stay active on your platforms to keep your followers engaged
3. Invite audience participation by creating polls or asking questions
4. Use hashtags and tag your sponsors, stallholders and other supporters to gain momentum
5. Share your zero waste goals, targets and the end result

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| target audience | key messages  | strategies: before the event | strategies: during the event | strategies: after the event | task assigned to | notes |
| **Patrons and general public** | *e.g. Help us [achieve goal] at [name of event]* | * *e.g. Social media posts every week in lead-up to event*
 | * *e.g. Post two updates on social media during the event*
 | * *e.g Post results on social media one week after the event*
 | *e.g. Waste/Event Coordinator* | *Add any helpful notes that could be useful for future events* |
| **Event staff and volunteers** |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Stallholders** |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Contractors** |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Sponsors and supporters** |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Media organisations** |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **[Other]** |  |  |  |  |  |  |