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FOR UNIVERSITY GOVERNANCE

Communication Builder
a tool for Universities

KION
a cineca company

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Index

Foreword

The digital world offers a wide variety of *media*, messages types and reception modes. Communications can interact across the different media, realizing a multichannel digital integrated communication, and providing a mutually positive amplification effect. Such amplification and its effectiveness can be fully measured through web-based monitoring systems.

Communication builder is a unique system for digital communication specifically designed for Universities to provide them with a very effective and low cost tool to interactively communicate with all stakeholders: current and future students, teachers, staff, business representatives, etc., through the most appropriate channels and with specific contents.

Communication Builder features a user-friendly, web-based environment to create custom communication campaigns, while offering a main dashboard for managing and monitoring them. The digital media platform allows for quick and targeted delivery of information, thus ensuring high-performance and content-driven communication. The system currently supports channels as the web for small thematic sites, emails and SMS for direct communication; direct interaction with social networks like Facebook will be available in future releases.

Communication Builder provides a tight interaction with Google Analytics, whose advanced features, available at no charge, allow a detailed monitoring of all on-line actions –websites, email, socials and so on – including the traffic generated towards other websites.
This makes it possible to assess the Return on Investments on digital communications, in a way by far easier and quicker than what can be done with traditional media (advertising, newspapers, posters…).

Communication Builder is developed by KION, leveraging the experience gained from many years of collaboration with Italian Universities and from the contribution of established international marketing professionals. It is available both as a stand-alone application and as part of a U-GOV's Students Management System, ESSE3.

Communication Builder project is constantly evolving towards a tight interaction with all instruments a University could successfully use for its communication processes: e-learning platforms, social networking, portals, brand sites, newsletter, etc.

Upon request, KION also offers integrated and specialized consulting about designing, developing, deploying and monitoring the overall campaign. With this approach, Universities can focus at defining the objective of the campaign, without the burden of in-house specialized staff

The goal:

Offering to Universities tools, consultancy and services for a structured, interacting, up-to-date communication, able to reach every person among its target with an interesting communication, choosing the adequate medium and taking advantage of its peculiarities.

Communication Builder

Digital media are smart, quick, up-to-date, largely customizable according to the target, capable of interacting and amplifying each other. Through digital media it is possible to get the user's attention by providing him with the information he is interested in through a personal one-to-one and yet machine-driven communication: this will raise the perceived quality of communication and with it the attention of the target. Moreover, different digital media can refer one to the other (e.g. e-mail communication may refer to web and social networks presence, web and social network may refer one to the other, etc), gaining an amplifying effect.

Communication Builder makes it easy for Universities to use such media, leveraging their main characteristics and creating an effective communication.
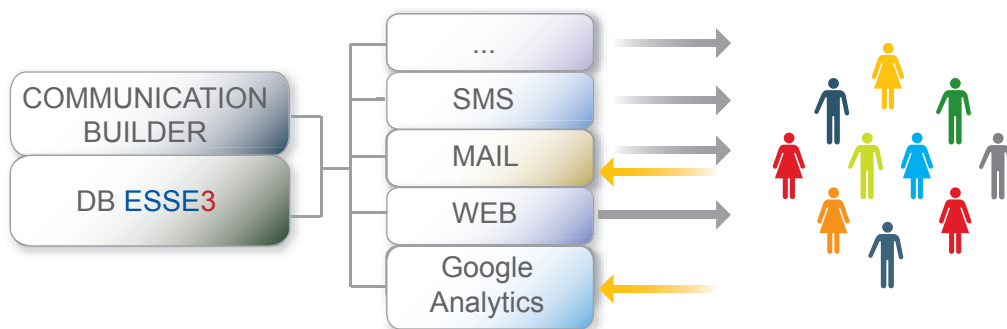
In order to always use the most adequate communication system, Communication builder provides support for various types of communication: from single messages to structured multi-channel campaigns, centered on given subject, purpose and target.

The many available digital media differentiate through the kind of communication it is possible to realize, its audience, the usual reception modes; communication actions made through these media can amplify each other through reciprocal linking and recalling: a multichannel communication campaign organizes actions in order to optimize such interaction – and the results can be accurately measured with web analytics.
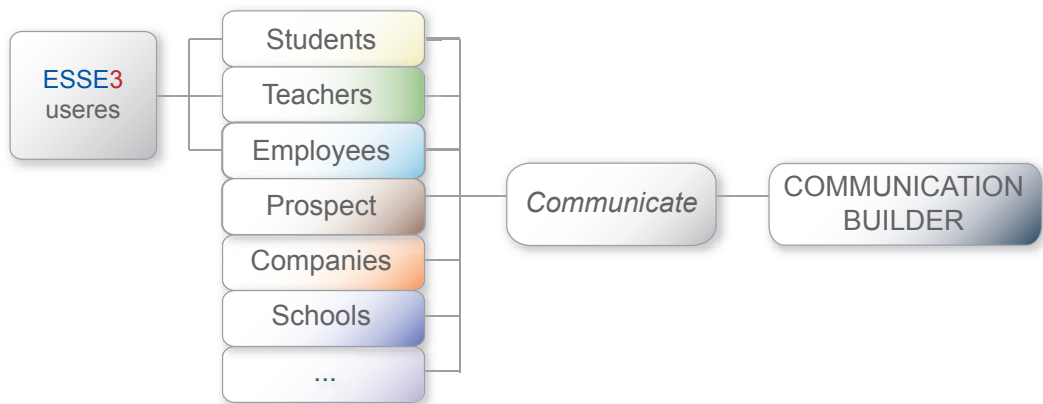
Contacts

A university already knows a lot about people involved in it: it knows who they are, their contact information – from e-mail to home address through cell phone –, age, interests, study level: thanks to the integration with ESSE3, Communication Builder can leverage all this information for communication purposes, turning a management database into a contacts database, with the full potential of a CRM application.

Thanks to such integration, the user will only have to express the defining parameters for a target contact list once, and it will always be available and up-to-date for other customized communications.
Moreover it will be possible to manage external contacts, concerning people who are not – or not yet – directly involved with the University, such as potential students, schools or business representatives.
alınarak işlem yapılmaktadır.

For all contacts also privacy issues related information is managed, such as permissions given for communications through a given channel.

Campaigns

Communication Builder offers a single Mainboard to manage and monitor communication campaigns spreading through different digital media. A campaign is a set of communication actions with a shared purpose, targeting a specific public and interacting with each other. A communication action can be an e-mail, a website, an SMS and so on.

> A campaign about post-lauream courses could include a small website referencing pertaining contents inside the University's main website; some e-mail to alumni, some to teachers of similar course, some to people who graduated at other universities; an official presence on social networks with PR activities towards chosen groups; SMS to interested people when presentation events are approaching; paper material and so on.

Communication Builder allows managing multiple campaigns; inside each of them it is possible to create and publish small websites, appealing e-mails, MHP compliant pages for digital terrestrial television, and SMS, while other channels are being developed.

Campaign management inside *Communication Builder* includes:
• A multi-channel content management system, allowing the use of same contents on
  different media without any need for duplicate information
• A tight interaction with Google Analytics – Google's web monitoring system – allowing its
  activation and customization without any need for coding skills.
• Roles distinction (editors, web designers, marketers) allowing each contributor to
  cooperate according to his/her specific skills

Monitoring

For web-based communication actions, a quick and accurate monitoring is possible.
Right now *Communication Builder* interacts with Google Analytics, whose advanced,
marketing-tailored and free of charge service allows monitoring with interesting details the
performance of online actions and traffic generated towards other sites.
A quick and detailed monitoring allows an accurate evaluation of a campaign's ROI: this is
a relevant added value for digital actions compared to traditional ones (paper advertising,
television, billboards...), whose revenue is much more difficult and slow to compute.

Communication channels

Communication Builder currently supports two direct communication channels – E-mail and
SMS – where it is possible to realize a nearly one-to-one communication; and two publicly
available channels – web and DTT – acting as landing area, where and interested user can
find detailed information, or a deeper interaction.
Web is also what allows an accurate monitoring for other channels' ROI, if they can convey
users to web.

✉ E-Mail

E-mails can be used as regular newsletter or as una-tantum actions meant to stress a
single news or event.
It is possible to directly address the receiver from inside a mail; sender name can also be
customized according to best-practices in direct communication.

• Newsletters
• Informative mail
• Advertising of contents or services available on the website

📱 SMS

The strength of an SMS is the ability to reach its target when they are offline, with brief and
punctual information, for example reminders of events or deadlines, invitations, or anything
creativity can put in 160 characters.

• Spread news
• Invitations to events
• Reminders
• Recommendations of web pages
• web sayfalarının tavsiye edilmesi

Ad personam SMS can be sent during a communication campaign, but also with more specific functional and informative purposes.

Brand sites

During a communication campaign revolving around an event or service, it can be useful to gather in a single place any information concerning it, so that it can be easily reached by anybody, without any need to surf through deep levels of a complex site such as the official website of a university.
Such a brand site will act as a landing area, where interested user can arrive, find references to what they need and directly navigate to the corresponding pages on external sites.
The complexity degree of such sites can vary, from a simple collection of links to a more complex area with authentication, interactions, newsletter subscription and so on.

DTT Pages

Channels and programs on Digital Terrestrial Television (DTT) can have interactive pages, which can be viewed by users using the remote's keys. Such pages can be always available on a given channel or tied to a specific TV show or time; they can provide information, advertising, games and so on.
Communication Builder allows designing such pages and the navigation inside them, just like a website. Given that to transmit such contents an agreement with a broadcaster is needed, it is possible to create:

• Thematic always-on sites
• Sites tied to specific shows
• Animated interactive advertising
• Banners
• T-Learning

New technologies aren't just technologies anymore: they are a new way to communicate, to live socially, to spread information. Digitalization of information has started a lot of different ways to communicate: different media, many of which are located inside or refer to the World Wide Web.

Especially the youngest generations and their most educated part spend a conspicuous and growing part of their time online, in virtual environments, each with its specific content, its typical expression style, its purpose and audience.

Virtual places are full with students, former students, potential students, researchers, business representatives: nearly anybody who – for one reason or another – can be an interesting target for a University's communication; just like it happens on television, newspapers and physical public places – and even more.

Moreover, digital media allow to reach people one by one, selecting them based on tastes and interests, building with them a personal dialogue with much more chances to be interesting for both sides – and with a minimum expense when compared to what is required by traditional media.

Most online actions can be monitored and analyzed, so that it is possible to understand in nearly real-time and with interesting details how effective it is being, which contents are most interesting, which actions get the better response, where the audience is geographically located, if it is more active during the weekends or during working days, if it uses smart technology or not, and so on. Thus it is possible to change the communication itself accordingly, in order to be more effective and adequate to the target.

In order to reach this goal, we have to know how each media and each virtual place is meant to be used, which are their potentials and weaknesses, their user-base, etc: a University could choose to use e-mail communication, a presence on a social network, the building of a community – in each case it is essential to know the peculiarities of the chosen media in order to better exploit its potential and fulfill the campaign's goal.

> How could we let EU students know about our post-graduate courses? Is it possible to effectively manage contacts with high schools? Can I advertise on Facebook? Is it appropriate to advertise on Facebook about our new MBA? Is it better to place a paid ad or to invest on digital PR in social networks? How can we get e-mail addresses of potential students? Once we have e-mail addresses of interested students, what should we do with them? How can SMS be useful? When, to whom and with which content? Are students interested in e-mails we are sending to them?

Answers to those questions require being constantly up-to-date and competent both on communication subjects and on technological means. For every typical activity and purpose of a University, a series of actions on digital media can be identified which could usefully integrate and amplify traditional communication actions, or act autonomously, according to needs.

Kion is able to provide universities with services and consultancy on these subjects, supporting the University's skills with its own. *Communication Builder*, together with Kion's consultancy, provides a University with all necessary means to manage digital communication in a flexible, dynamic, up-to-date and appealing way; addressing various targets; working on different channels; so that its communication is adequate and modern, reinforcing a fresh young but always authoritative image for the University.

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With Communication Builder the University has all necessary tools to effectively manage communication towards all of its contacts – internal as well as external.

A consistent communication plan – or campaign – revolves around an object and a purpose, and takes place on the different channels provided by the system.

Skills needed at various levels to realize such a plan vary from the most technical ones, to the ability to design a campaign, to verbal and graphical creativity and the ability to manage conversations taking place on social media. Kion is capable of providing consultancy to Universities in such activities, as a support and complement to existing skills.

Designing Campaigns

Useful and effective integrated multichannel communication campaigns can revolve around various subjects with various goals.

Goals

- Gather contacts
- Create communities - inside or outside the University
- Spread the news about University's events
- Spread the news about University's services
- Incoming students
- Foreign students
- Keep contacts with companies alive
- Gather opinions
- Actively interact with students
- Face a critical situation
- Stress affection to University
- ...

Targets

- Students
- Former students
- Prospective students
- Business representatives
- Researchers
- Teachers
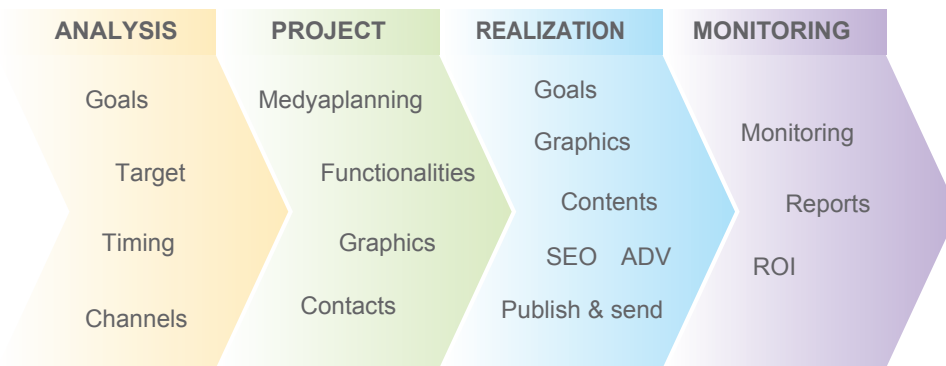- Public boards representatives
- High schools
- Foreign students
- ...

Channels

- Brand site
- E-Mail
- SMS
- Facebook
- Youtube
- Google AdWords
- LinkedIn
- Twitter
- Viral and Buzz Marketing
- Banners
- DTT
- …

Actions on digital channels may be coherently connected and interact with the usual and already planned traditional communication; in other cases digital channels may constitute the main communication plan: in this context minor actions on traditional media may help.

This is how Kion help a University building, realizing and evaluating the results of a digital communication campaign.

ANALYSIS	PROJECT	REALIZATION	MONITORING
Goals	Medyaplanning	Goals	Monitoring
Target	Functionalities	Graphics	Reports
Timing	Graphics	Contents	ROI
Channels	Contacts	SEO ADV	
		Publish & send	

1 - Analysis

A Kion communication consultant will analyze with you the University needs in this field. Once identified the desired context for a communication campaign (e.g. incoming students, services advertising, foreign students recruitment…) targets and goals for the campaign will be set.
Starting from goals, target and time constraints, the team will identify which channels should be used. It could be channels already supported by Communication Builder or new ones, digital or not: most important is their effectiveness in helping the University reach the designed goal.

International recruiting campaign
Goals
- let foreign students know about our University
- let domestic students and public know how our University cares about Internationalization

Target
- foreign students
- offices for student mobility in foreign universities
- actual students at our University
- general domestic public

2 – Project

For each channel, **type quantity content** and **timing** of actions will be chosen, as well as reciprocal interaction between different channels: cross-references from e-mails or SMS to web pages, from SMS to live events, from the brand site to social networks and so on.
This communication plan is outlined in a *Mediaplanning*, which will be the central referring point during the carrying out of the campaign.
If a brand site has to be realized, also its **functionalities** must be determined: a chance to record new contacts, a log-in only area with special contents, a dynamic calendar of events, a strong interaction with other systems (e.g. Facebook).
Very important in a communication action is its verbal and graphic content. Kion can realize for the University a set of graphic proposals creating for the concerned campaign a visual plan adequate to the campaign's goals and target, and coherent with the official brand - even when some innovation is needed.

A key element for the success of direct communication is the availability of **contacts** of people potentially interested to the concerned contents: e-mail addresses and cell phone numbers. Such contacts can be gathered through ad hoc actions leveraging other – not direct – channels, such as live events, web, advertising, PR on social networks. Contacts gathered in this way can then be used for direct communication.

3 – Realization

The *Mediaplanning* becomes a campaign inside *Communication Builder*: Here all actions will be realized and published. Once the University has chosen a graphical style, all actions (mail, web, paper…) will be designed accordingly.
Verbal contents can be realized through a tight interaction between the university staff and Kion consultants: communication managers inside universities know very well purposes and contents of the communication to be realized, while Kion consultant will support them in choosing the best style and form, according to the chosen channels and targets.
Kion can build some or all of the actions, and support the University staff for the duration of the campaign.
If a brand site will be realized, it will be optimized for search engines (**SEO**, Search Engine Optimization); it is also possible to make some **advertising online** to improve the site's visibility according to chosen **keywords**.

Google AdWords gives a chance to buy a presence among sponsored re-sults corresponding to search on chosen keywords. This will often cause a considerable amount of traffic to the site, with a very low expense.
On Facebook it is possible to show an ad on users' pages, chosen accor-ding to anagraphical data and interests, with a high chance to reach an interested and specific public.

4 – Monitoring

All web based actions can be monitored through Google Analytics, so that the return on investment (**ROI**) can actually be calculated.
Concerning monitoring and web analytics, Kion consultancy can consist of **reports**, gathering and interpreting the results of performed actions, or be limited to a technical and know-how support towards University staff dedicated to this activity.
The analysis of emerged results becomes a crucial starting point to improve future commu-nication actions and campaigns.

Skills and products

Each action making up a campaign requires a design phase, more or less complex accor-ding to involved media. Required skills range from verbal to graphic communications, to web development.
Kion offers its consultancy to Universities about
- **Visual communication**: design of suitable graphics, tailored to the campaign's target and coherent with the university's brand
- **Verbal communication**: consultancy on identification and expression of contents suitable to campaign, target and chosen media
- **Web development**: realization of required functionalities, such as ad hoc questionnaires, log-in reserved areas, automatic newsletters, etc
- Search Engine Optimization: optimization of the website and its pages for the best results on search engines
- **Keyword advertising**: keyword-based advertising of the site or other contents with pay-per-click or pay-per-impressions systems (e.g. Google AdWords, Facebook Ads)
- **Google Analytics**: activation and customization of monitoring, interpretation of its results
- **Research of contacts**: campaigns for contacts gathering, PR on social networks

Consultancy concerning single actions, if required, can be a support to competencies alre-ady available among the university's staff, as well as actual design and realization of:

• Web sites
• Graphical proposals
• Contents
• SEO
• Newsletters and e-mail templates
• Promotional material

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Communication in the student's life cycle

Instruments and services for digital communication can be useful in all phases of a student's life cycle
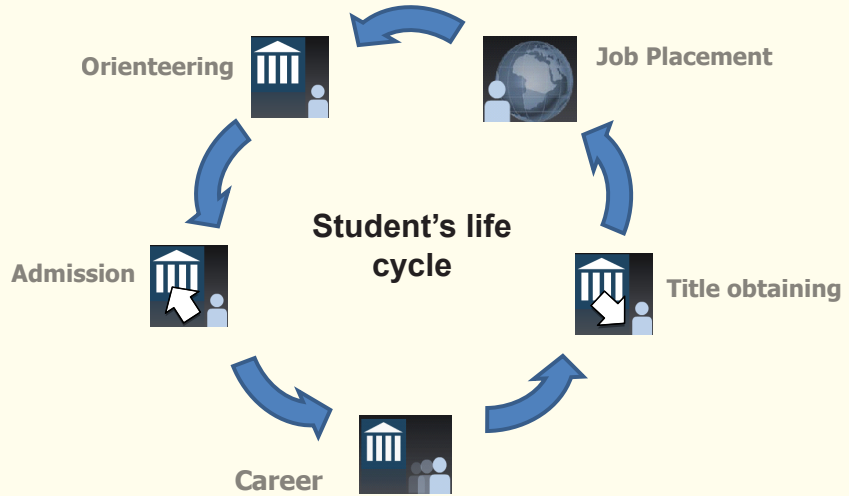
An incoming student can be accompanied by dedicated websites, ad-hoc emails with specific information, presence on social networks, newsletter services.
During his/her university career the University may successfully highlight its offer and services, towards students as well as staff and teachers.
The moment of job placement can be sustained with actions addressing students as well as business representatives and meant to help university accomplishing its role.
Alumni can then form an active community, capable of maintaining the affection to the university and constituting a first set of possible contacts for further formative offerings.

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