

The ten elements that make a web story worth-reading

Interreg Knowledge Fair session report | March 2024

Overview

This co-creation session gathered around 25 Interreg specialists (with a strong interest / focus on communication themes) who prioritised a reflection on how to create good digital articles, either for the Interreg portal or for their own programme's website.

The participants appreciated the theoretical contents and the dynamic parts of the session very much, and stated the need to have this kind of physical trainings more regularly to be updated on communication trends and also to be able to work together on key aspects such as content creation.

The atmosphere in the room was very participatory and positive. People exchanged their points of view openly and raised some communication issues they experienced, such as the difficulty to hold different professional hats (project officer, communication officer...) and perform them all efficiently, and the fact that we all think and interpret the same information in a different manner. The latter was the reflection extracted during the ice-breaker: participants had the same Lego pieces to create a duck and, surprisingly, each of them was different. They loved this exercise and acknowledged that each person faces and processes a task in their own way, and this applies, more than anything, to communication.

Methodology

The session was structured in the following blocks:

1. **Introduction and ice-breaking exercise.**
2. **Boosting the digital presence of Interreg:** state of play of the soon-to-come new Interreg website, where we stand with the current one, how can programmes contribute with content.
3. **Brand storytelling and 2024 digital trends,** focusing on the evolution of the term 'storytelling' and paying special attention to social media trends, web trends and digital storytelling trends.
4. **The ten elements that make a web story worth-reading:** listing and explaining all these elements, from relevance and proximity to emotion or scannable content.
5. **Practical exercises**

Key discussion points

The Interreg website

There is a consensus in the Interreg community to communicate together. A total of 90,3% of all stakeholders agree that it is relevant for Interreg programmes to communicate jointly on a new website and social media channels. Participants learned here about the niche of Interreg.eu, its target audience (archetypes), strategic objectives and key tactics to support user needs. They were very keen to contribute to the portal with content, such as: calls, interesting news, long format articles for the Interreg Highlights section or information about their programme.

Brand (corporate) storytelling

The current and world-wide accepted meaning of 'brand storytelling' is memorable and impactful content by shifting the focus from product / services features to narratives that evoke emotion, capture the imagination, and reflect the organisation's core values. Bearing this in mind, the revolution of the digital media and the fact that we now have various social media channels make essential the creation of this type of compelling and engaging stories that establish emotional connections with our audience.

The ten elements to create good digital content

These elements are: relevance, hot / breaking news, proximity, curiosity, conflict, emotion, consequences and impact, a well-crafted narrative, good pictures or videos and the creation of scannable content. It was also highlighted the importance of a good headline (magic formula: 'witty, pithy, pretty & hitty') and good multimedia material. These elements were summarised in the 'Website Content Writing Checklist', offered also as a giveaway at the Interreg.eu stand.

Discussion and practice

We know that 4 out 5 readers don't read an article if the headline hasn't been interesting to them. Also, the average time spent on a website is only 15 seconds, so if we don't spark interest in that time, then we probably aren't going to. In order to tackle these hot topics, participants had to work in groups, reflect on the best way to write meaningful content and create an article together. These are the tasks they had to perform:

- Write a headline a subtitle for this article.
- Organize the pieces of the puzzle so that the article looks as it should (remember: most important info first, then rest of details, and the background & context at the end).
- Check if this article meets the criteria listed on the 'Web Content Checklist'. Yes, no? Why not? Reflect on how to improve it.
- Share each exercise with the rest of participants in the plenary.

Conclusions

The meeting and practical exercises showed that it is not an easy task to create interesting and well-crafted content that interests our audience and stands out from the rest of information that is spread every day. Also, some participants were not communication experts or even knew the basics of communication so they appreciated the basics given on how to write digital content.

Moreover, participants connected the 'What the duck' ice-breaker to the final results: they all had the same article and listened to the same theoretical content given by the speakers, and yet they produced 4 articles that had different angles, style and tone. We all think and interpret differently, and we have to bear this in mind when communicating.

Programmes said the session was very useful to them and shared what they will bring with them after these 2 hours:

- Focus on people and human content
- People really see things differently
- I loved the duck idea!
- Proximity both of heart and place
- Let's focus on LinkedIn more than Facebook
- Our website could learn from the sites of other programmes
- You must know your target audience
- Looking forward to the new Interreg website





Anna Galyga • 1st

Senior Communication Officer at Interreg Baltic Sea Region

4d • 🌐

Same set of Lego bricks, same task and completely different outcome: every duck built by colleagues was different!

What does it say?

Naturally, there are different components of a good project [#story](#) that can be put together in multiple ways: depending on the people we want to reach, medium, the message itself and the call to action... and each of them can be awesome!

Thanks dearest [Interact Programme](#) team for highlighting the immense power of [#communication](#) again! And thanks for this wonderful experience we have had at the [#Interreg](#) Knowledge Fair 🍌

[#MadeWithInterreg](#) [#communicationrocks](#) [Interreg](#)



  You and 26 others

Session leader: Laura Belenguer and Eva Martínez

Report drafted by: Laura Belenguer and Eva Martínez