Inclusive and equitable online engagement in the time of COVID-19

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Who I am.

Hi, I’m Miranda.

I am a Senior Consultant at Argyle, one of the largest independent engagement and communication firms in Canada.

I am a Co-chair and board member of the hua foundation, a non-profit organization in Vancouver’s Chinatown working to strengthen community resilience and advance civic decision-making through an inclusive, anti-racism lens.
Today’s questions
for equitable and inclusive online engagement

**REACH**
How to reach and hear from seldom heard groups

**TOOLS**
How to select accessible online tools or platforms

**DESIGN**
How your online platform and content can be inclusive

**ACCESS**
How to engage those with limited digital literacy or infrastructure

(argyle logo)
How could online engagement be accessible?
How could online engagement be inclusive and equitable?
REACH

How to reach and hear from seldom heard groups
Design a strategy to reach your targeted groups

1. Define targeted groups and representation goals
2. Research your target groups
3. Develop promotions & outreach strategy and budget
4. Develop demographic questions for engagement
5. Develop campaign and outreach materials
6. Launch outreach and promotions campaign
7. Monitor and adjust promotions based on participation
Invest in your integrated C + E strategy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Engagement</th>
<th>Communications</th>
<th>Promotions</th>
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</table>
| • Honouraria for community liaisons, caretakers or champions to help others participate  
• Honouraria or incentives for participants  
• Honouraria for community organizations to amplify to their networks  
• Multilingual online engagement platform  
• Platform that meets accessibility standards (like WCAG 2.0) | • Hiring or working with graphic designers who know accessibility principles  
• Translation services  
• ASL services  
• Closed caption services  
• Video services | • Translation services  
• Multicultural ad development and translation  
• Media buy services and budget for traditional, digital in English and cultural media outlets  
• Focus group testing of campaign concept, visuals and language |
To illustrate, here’s a quick pull from Vividata:

1. Of the *Indigenous participants* surveyed, the proportion of smartphone users (81.8%) exceeded the national average (80.6%)

2. Of participants who don’t speak English at home, the proportion of smartphone users (86.1%) also exceeded the national average (80.6%):

3. Participants above 60 years old were found to be particularly connected with tablets (57.9%), compared to the 55.9% national average

4. Participants with household income lower than $25k accessed computers (83.3%, compared with 90% national average) and smartphones (71.4%, compared with 80.6% national average)

Source: Vividata 2020, Toronto based impact and marketing research firm

1. Sample: 892 out of 1,0033,000, excluding northern Canada
2. Sample: 2,162 out of 2,861,000
3. Sample: 13,628 out of 9,181,000
4. Sample: 3317 representing population 4,534,000
"It doesn’t make sense to think of disabled people as a niche group. It makes more sense to design as if anyone could be disabled."

- Isabella Kulkarni, Producer of Adobe Wireframe Podcast (Inclusivity is Good Design episode, Oct 2019)
TOOLS

How to select accessible online tools or platforms
Selecting your online tool or platform

What is the desired output from your engagement?

• **Virtual ‘in-person’ dialogue and presentations?** Consider Zoom, Adobe Connect, Click Meeting, Live Stream, GoToWebinar, and other web-based meeting platforms

• **Small group discussions?** Consider Facebook Groups, Google Hangouts, Microsoft Team, Zoom

• **Collaborative polling or questions?** Consider Slido, Poll Everywhere

• **Interactive commenting and ideation?** Consider more advanced online engagement platforms

• **Transparent dialogue on a contentious subject?** Consider more advanced online platforms that display polling and voting results, posts or interactive commenting in real time (Slido, Engagement HQ, Social Pinpoint, The Hive, Ethelo, Civil Space)
Selecting your online tool or platform

What kind of public input do you need?

- **Geo-based data?** Consider The Hive, Social Pinpoint, Metroquest, Engagement HQ, Placespeak, Civil Space
- **Ideas, scrawl or vision wall?** Consider The Hive, Engagement HQ, Social Pinpoint
- **Qualitative and quantitative input?** Consider free survey or polling platforms (Survey Gizmo)
- **Tradeoff analysis or budgeting?** Consider Ethelo, Metroquest, Civil Space
- **Consensus-based decision-making?** Consider Ethelo
- **Prioritization or ranking of scenarios or images?** Consider Ethelo, The Hive, Metroquest, Civil Space
- **Real-time, interactive commenting?** Consider Engagement HQ, Ethelo, The Hive
Selecting your online tool or platform

Screenshots of online engagement platform tools
Selecting your online tool or platform

Who are you trying to engage?

- **Multilingual communities?** Platforms that can be translated (Social Pinpoint, Ethelo, The Hive)
- **For those hearing impaired and others?** Platforms offering closed captions (Zoom, Google Hangouts)
- **Any user, particularly those with lower digital literacy?** Platforms with simple navigability, is user-friendly and has a visual layout (Civil Space, Survey Gizmo) and platforms that your participants are already comfortable with and use (Facebook)
- **Those requiring design for various disabilities?** Platforms aligned with WCAG 2.0 standards (Zoom, Survey Gizmo, Placespeak, Ethelo)
- **Canadians?** Platforms with data hosted in Canada (Survey Gizmo, The Hive, Civil Space, Ethelo, Engagement HQ, Social Pinpoint, Placespeak)
Selecting your online tool or platform

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WCAG 2.0 – Web Content Accessibility Guidelines

“Following these guidelines will make content accessible to a wider range of people with disabilities, including blindness and low vision, deafness and hearing loss, learning disabilities, cognitive limitations, limited movement, speech disabilities, photosensitivity and combinations of these.

Following these guidelines will also often make your Web content more usable to users in general.”
DESIGN

How your online platform and content can be inclusive
Select and confirm the best tools to ask engagement questions

Build platform

Refine platform

Develop content needed to help public provide informed input

Test platform

Launch and trouble-shoot platform

Test your online platform or tool
Take a user-centered approach

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Navigation process</th>
<th>Layout</th>
<th>Content</th>
<th>Engagement tools</th>
<th>User experience</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tell them where to go next</td>
<td>Inform, don’t overload</td>
<td>Use humanizing, simple language</td>
<td>Put your priority questions first</td>
<td>Don’t ask for too much time</td>
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<tr>
<td>Don’t send them away in new windows</td>
<td>Break up info with headers, drop-downs, line spaces</td>
<td>Use visuals and videos</td>
<td>Ask clear and short questions</td>
<td>Give people space to be heard</td>
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Draft content using the translation triple crown

1. Translate technical content into regular-people speak

2. Translate this into elementary school vocabulary

3. Translate that into as many languages based on your targeted groups’ needs, as required, and/or as budget allows
Design for your target groups’ needs

Do’s and Don’ts of designing for accessibility

Posters for:
1. low vision
2. D/deaf and hard of hearing, dyslexia
3. motor disabilities
4. users on the autistic spectrum
5. users of screen readers

Accessibility.blog.gov.uk
ACCESS

How to engage those with limited digital literacy or infrastructure
## Some other options ...

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<th>Digital approaches</th>
<th>Non-digital approaches</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Low-bandwidth, centralized platforms (reducing loading new windows)</td>
<td>• Community liaisons, caretakers or champions to help others participate (translate,</td>
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<td>• More text-based information (rather than videos and high-res images)</td>
<td>walk through the info, record input, etc)</td>
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<td>• Online platforms that are mobile-responsive and easy to use via smartphones</td>
<td>• Partnerships with community organizations</td>
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<td>• Leveraging existing community channels and digital behaviours (like Facebook)</td>
<td>• Telephone interviews or townhalls</td>
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<td>• Provide paid network wifi hubs/hotspots</td>
<td>• Radio phone-in shows</td>
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<td>• Facilitation toolkits (Dialogue Toolkit, DinnerTalk Kits, board games)</td>
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<td>• Community scrawl wall or display</td>
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Thank you for your time.

Questions? Don’t hesitate to reach out.
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Learn about us on our website here.
Visit our blog to find advice on engaging and communicating in the era of COVID-19.