University of Illinois Extension
Marketing and Communications

MarCom Project Workflow

A collaborative process to guide development of marketing and communication projects for program teams, unit leadership, and field communicators

Updated 11/13/2022

Illinois Extension's wide range of educational programs require collaboration between staff and communicators at all levels of the organization. The marketing and communications project workflow guides the marketing and communications asset development process which supports Extenion's educational outreach.

Project Request Guidelines

- Determine if your project meets state-level project request criteria using information in this guide.
- Build in sufficient advance notice to accommodate standard turnaround times for asset delivery.
- Emergency requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis based on scope, size, and impact.
- Submit requests for projects that meet state-level marketing and communications criteria at: **go.illinois.edu/MarketingRequest**

Project Turnaround Times

Use general turnaround times below to help plan your project request. Outsourced translation services and large-scale projects, such as multi-page publications or reports, may require longer lead times.

If you are unsure of project needs or scope, reach out as soon as possible to inquire about realistic timeframes.

	Standard Project	*Large-Scale Project
English Only	4 weeks	8+ weeks
Spanish Only	4 weeks	8+ weeks
English + Spanish	8 weeks	16+ weeks
Spanish Only + Design or Web Updates	6 to 8 weeks	16+ weeks
*Other Languages	Turnaround times determined on a case-by-case basis.	
*Request for Referral		

Request consultation with a MarCom team member as early as possible to discuss realistic timeframes for large-scale projects or translation needs in languages other than Spanish.

If you need help getting started with a project that falls outside of state-level creation or distribution, request a consultation to get ideas for moving forward.

Content and Distribution Pairings

Four scenarios represent typical content creation and distribution combinations for marketing and communications efforts throughout Extension:

Statewide Content | Statewide Distribution

Subject matter content is developed by state-level program teams and offered widely for all units to promote.

Program examples:

- AAB & NREE: Everyday Environment, State Master Gardener, State Master Naturalists, Certified Livestock Training, Gardeners Corner, Spotlight on Natural Resources, LIVE with a Horticulturist, Farm and Ranch Stress Center, AgrAbility
- FCS: Fill Your Pantry, Community Seminar Series, Health at Home, Discover Wellness, Let's Talk Money, Discover Caregiving, Find Food IL, Get Savvy, Wits Workout, Lessons for Living
- SNAP-ED: Statewide effort with Beth Peralta as lead developer
- CED: Local Government Education, Small Business Development, Broadband Access, Illinois Nutrient Loss Program, Rural Stress
- 4-H: Statewide events with Carissa Nelson as lead developer

Regional Content | Statewide Distribution

Subject matter content is coordinated by regional teams for which statewide marketing distribution of more than five units is appropriate.

Program examples:

- AAB & NREE: Four Seasons Gardening, Dudley Smith Beef, Urban Farmer, Wee Naturalists, Good Growing, Growing Great Vegetables, Gardening in the Air
- FCS: Money Mentors

Summary of Communications Workflow

Situation	Asset Development	Website Home (Events and Releases)	Social Media Exposure	Media Distribution	Marketing Distribution
Statewide Content, Statewide Distribution	State MarCom	Global website; share to all units and groups relevant to topic	State social media accounts; shared with units	Statewide	State marketing update
Regional Content, Statewide Distribution					
Statewide Content, Local Distribution	State MarCom develops; customizes for local unit	Unit website; share with up to four neighboring units	Unit	Local	Local
Local Content, Local Distribution	Unit				

Statewide Content | Local Distribution

Event or program is based on a statewide program that is delivered locally for a specific unit at a time separate from statewide presentations. Branding for these events must align with state marketing.

Program examples:

• Life's Moments, Happy Healthy Providers

Local Content | Local Distribution

Event or program of local interest and local distribution; not part of statewide branded programming.

Program examples:

• Photography workshop, Flower arranging, Quick breads workshop, 4-H leader meetings, etc.

Statewide Content: Marketing Assets

Asset selection for a project depends on the project's marketing goals. Common assets requested and developed by the state team include: Graphics packages, website and social media event setup, media releases, website and email newsletters, global or topic website updates, email marketing, handouts or flyers, impact reports, video uploads, infographics, and statewide media distribution.

Asset Development Process

State level asset development: Begins with the state marketing and communications team, using input supplied by the project requestor (client).

1. Client submits a marketing request with sufficient advance notice at: **go.illinois.edu/MarketingRequest**
2. Client receives an automated confirmation of the project request receipt.
3. MarCom team reviews request, assigns necessary staff to the project, and contacts client to confirm project details and asset delivery timeline.
4. Projects enters development queue; drafts are provided to clients for review when ready.
5. Events and press releases live on the global website and are shared to unit and group websites.
6. All project marketing assets are included in the weekly state marketing update each Friday.

Local asset development: Begins at the unit level, with the unit communicator, if applicable.

1. Local program staff initiate discussion with their designated unit staff as early as possible to determine necessary marketing assets and timeline.
2. Creation of events, press releases, and social media is completed at the unit level following Extension brand standards.
3. Units may share assets with up to four other units.