ADR Institute of Alberta

Communications and Marketing Plan

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Part 1: Communication Goals

ADRIA is a membership association which communicates in a way that engages and serves our members, the public, and our clients. With that in mind, our internal and external communications:

- deliver a clear message that accurately reflects ADRIA's values and services
- are congruent with the messages of the ADR Institute of Canada
- use current communication practices and technology
- have a consistent, identifiable message across our different platforms, and
- show measurable benefits for ADRIA's investment of time and resources.

Objectives

ADRIA has four main strategic directions which guide our communications and marketing:

Enhance the value, awareness, reputation of, and access to ADR Services in Alberta

Marketing Goals:

- make ADRIA the source of ADR information and services in Alberta
- promote ADR options and resources in Alberta
- make ADR the first choice for anyone working through conflict

Strengthen the ADR profession

Marketing Goals:

- promote professional designations and qualifications
- demonstrate the value of ethical standards and practices
- strengthen connections with other ADR organizations and partners
- connect the public with ADR professionals
- influence government and policy makers

Strengthen ADRIA as a membership organization

Marketing Goals:

- all ADR practitioners and supporters in Alberta become members
- increase number of corporate members

Strengthen the long term sustainability of ADRIA as an organization

Marketing Goals:

- fill ADRIA's courses
- increase use of our services (eg. Appoint & Select process, private contract training)
- raise the profile of ADRIA in the ADR community
- promote the value we offer members and clients

Part 2: Target Audiences

ADRIA wants to reach and engage:

Members

- current members
- potential members (including past members)
- all ADR practitioners and supporters in our province
- corporate/organizational clients which employ potential members

The Public

- people wanting to resolve conflicts in their lives
- people wanting to prevent conflict or harm
- people wanting to learn more about ADR
- individuals wanting to hire ADR clients directly
- students for our courses

Organizations

Organizations, including corporations, businesses, non-profits, government organizations, cultural communities, labour and trades, learning institutions, and associations, may be clients, members, partners, and/or a source of students:

- clients for contract ADR training
- students for our courses
- organizations seeking an ADR process
- organizations wanting to hire an ADR practitioner directly
- organizations seeking assistance selecting an ADR practitioner
- organizations which would benefit from ADR clauses in their contracts and policies

Situation analysis for Membership

Why do people become members?

- they are ADR practitioners (mediators, arbitrators, facilitators, restorative justice practitioners, parenting coordinators)
- to enroll in our courses
- to coach or instruct courses for ADRIA
- to receive or maintain a professional designation
- to be on rosters
- to meet the qualifications for a job (must be a member of a professional organization)
- to enhance credentials and resume
- to complement a primary profession (eg. Human Resources, Engineering, or Law)
- to receive a discount on insurance
- to be part of a community and connect with other practitioners
- for professional development or to attend a conference
- to stay informed of ADR news and events
- to meet an employer requirement and/or because employer pays for membership

Barriers to membership:

- lack of perceived value
- cost
- better value elsewhere
- not needed to practice ADR
- had a bad experience
- unaware we exist
- misinformed about what we do
- not making money in the field

Where we can find and/or connect with members:

- our courses
- courses at other institutions
- ADR practitioners

- people applying for and receiving a professional designation
- Legal community
- other ADR organizations
- Human Resources professionals
- Social Workers
- Counsellors
- people who work with families and others who are in conflict
- people working for the ADR section of a company (advocacy, ombudsmen)
- online

Situation analysis for the Public

Why do members of the public contact ADRIA?

- for information about mediation and arbitration
- to find information about becoming an ADR practitioner
- to take ADR training
- to find an ADR practitioner

Barriers to interacting with ADRIA:

- unaware of ADRIA and/or its services
- unaware of ADR
- ADRIA's presence is more concentrated in urban vs rural area, and is more present in Edmonton than other communities

Where we can find and/or connect with the public:

- online (website, social media, videos, podcasts)
- public events
- events of other organizations
- through the media (newspapers, television, radio)

Situation analysis for Organizations

Why do organizations contact ADRIA?

- for information about ADR practices

- to find information about hiring an ADR practitioner
- to request help in hiring an ADR practitioner
- to receive training for their workplace
- for information about practitioner qualifications

Barriers to interacting with ADRIA:

- unaware of ADRIA and/or its services
- unaware of ADR
- not aware of change from AAMS to ADRIA
- connected with ADRIC instead

Where we can find and/or connect with organizations:

- online (website, social media, videos, podcasts)
- public events
- at an event organized by the corporation
- at events of other organizations
- through the media (newspapers, television, radio)
- Better Business Bureaus
- Chambers of Commerce
- Economic Development Corporations

Part 3: Key Messages

Key Message - All Audiences

ADRIA is the source of ADR information, education, resources, and expertise in our province.

Learn about ADR

- What is ADR
- When to use ADR
- How to access ADR

Find an ADR professional:

- How to hire a mediator/arbitrator/ADR practitioner:
  - awareness of unregulated profession
  - the value of designations and credentials to find a qualified, ethical practitioner
- value of ethics, standards, codes of conduct, and complaints process
- ADRIA directory is a source of qualified practitioners (mediators, arbitrators, trainers, coaches, RJ practitioners, and speakers)
- range of fees for service
- request referrals for practitioners in a particular speciality (Appoint and select process)
- receive assistance in determining criteria, and advertising for a position or contract

Receive training to:

- improve communication and conflict resolution skills
- expand job and leadership skills
- become a Mediator or Arbitrator
- develop build a healthy work environment and/or cost-effective in-house resource (through our custom training for organizations)

Key Message for Members

ADRIA membership is valuable and beneficial.

- Value: news and updates about current issues, events, and opportunities in ADR in Alberta, discounts on insurance
- Opportunity: directory of practitioners, referrals, job board, participation as an active volunteer in ADRIA to share or gain experience
- Professionalism: nationally recognized training, Mediation and Arbitration designations, professional development (including training and conferences), enhanced resume & job prospects
- Networking: connection to other ADR professionals, social events
- Public Relations: part of an organization that is enhancing role of ADR in our province

Key Message for the Public

ADR is the first choice for preventing and managing conflict.

Information the public needs:

- why ADR should be the first response to conflict (benefits)
- options: mediation,arbitration, circles, other processes
- access to ADR services (hire your own practitioner, access a government or non-profit program, workplace programs)

Key Message for Organizations

ADR is the best choice for preventing and managing conflict.

Information organizations need:

- why ADR is the best response to conflict
- difference between mediation vs arbitration
- how to hire a mediator/arbitrator
    - the value of designations and credentials to find a qualified, ethical practitioner
    - value of ethics, standards, codes of conduct
- when to have your own resources/ when to call a pro
- benefits of a of a complaint policy
- why there should be an ADR clause in contracts and ADRIA in the clause

Part 4: Implementation

This plan will roll out in phases over 18 months, and the strategies and tools will continue to be updated and augmented with input from our staff and board. There is so much potential to spread the word about ADR and what ADRIA does that the biggest challenge is prioritizing all the actions that could be taken. The strategy is to start with the basics by updating the tools we already use (newsletter, website, social media), and then expand into new opportunities.

The first priority is to update our website. It is the first place people look for information, and it is the best way to showcase what we offer and engage potential audiences. All other marketing materials point back to the website.

ADRIA is currently challenged in reaching its audiences because information on the website is outdated or incomplete. The current website system through Digital Tea is difficult to update, has limited capacity to change the layout or integrate visual and interactive elements, and it is not mobile-friendly. The website is also expensive to maintain; changing the menu or adding certain pages or content requires a request to the Digital Tea and a cost for service. Website development and online tools have changed over the last few years, and it is now possible to build our own website and membership database at a fraction of the cost of having one custom-built. A priority is to find a system that meets all our communication and database needs and to create a professional-looking, easy to navigate website.

Tied into the website and membership database is the need for an online directory of ADR practitioners that pops up first in an online search and is easy to use to locate an ADR practitioner in any community in the province.

Strategies, Tools, Budget & Timelines

Below is a table laying out an initial list of the strategies and tools ADRIA can use to get key messages to our audiences. No matter what the tool or platform, the focus will be on effectively engaging our audiences to not just try and sell what we have to offer, but to offer each audience information and/or resources that meet their needs.

TABLE: Strategies and Tools to meet ADRIA's Communication Goals

Goal	Strategies	Tools	Budget	Timeline
All ADR practitioners and supporters in Alberta become members Promote the value we offer members	Connect regularly with engaging information, personal messages from staff & board, and opportunities Appreciation Events	Monthly E-newsletter via MailChimp Social media: Facebook and LinkedIn pages Increase social media followers through contests (giveaway free tickets to one of our events) Encourage staff and volunteers to lead the way by "liking" our social media pages and "sharing" our content online. Job Board CR Day: Celebratory event for all practitioners	Free for up to 2,000 subscribers and 12,000 emails Free Cost of tickets Free TBA	Done Done First six months First six months
Increase number of corporate members Promote the value we offer members	Connect regularly with engaging and useful information	Email campaign Printed material	Free	

Goal	Strategies	Tools	Budget	Timeline
Educate people: -make ADRIA the hub of ADR information and services in Alberta -promote ADR resources in Alberta -make ADR the first choice for the public -promote professional designations and qualifications -demonstrate the value of ethical standards and practices -demonstrate the value of ethical standards and practices	Provide clear, complete, and easy to navigate information about ADR and ADRIA's services on our website. Have an active social media presence (start conversations, answer questions, assist clients, and encourage engagement.) Search Engine Optimize our website	New website through Weebly that is mobile friendly, can be updated by more than one administrator from any computer. Add a blog to our website - address common questions and offer tips. YouTube videos promoting skills, demonstrations for students, answering questions and giving tips for people or workplaces. SEO the website and use Google Analytics	Weebly Pro plan is $8 (USD) per month **or** Weebly Business plan is $25 (USD) per month - includes e-commerce which we won't likely need. Additional costs: Graphics and photos for the website (also to be used on printed materials, swag, etc.) Free on a Weebly website. ? Free	First six months one year 18 months First 6 months
Connect the public with ADR professionals	Directory of mediators, arbitrators, trainers, speakers, and RJ practitioners	Wild Apricot - creates membership database with online payment, event (and course?) registration, and directories that can be integrated on website. Have a postcard-sized flyer with the directory link for handing out.	$100 (USD)/month for up to 2000 members or contacts (10% discount if paid annually) TBA	First six months

Goal	Strategies	Tools	Budget	Timeline
Fill courses	Make it easy for anyone looking for training to find us Target organizations which offer outside professional development	Better layout and navigation on website (add FAQ, testimonials), SEO. Get on list of vendors. Target with email information to leaders, PD departments.	n/a ?	First six months 1 year
Increase use of our services: Corporate Contract Training Appoint and Select ADR clause for Contracts	Engage corporate clients: offer them something useful Write articles for publications for other industry Have a presence at industry events/ conferences	Website, blog In addition to a short brochure or handout, Make something "keepable" - with our name and contact information eg. Guide to selecting a ADR professional, workplace assessment?, free directory. New display poster/banner for conferences and events.	TBA TBA	1 year 1 year
Increase the use of our services: members of the public Make ADR the first choice for anyone working through conflict	Offer something useful. Have a presence at appropriate public events Create awareness campaign with a call to action Organize our own public events Seek Media attention / make ourselves available to comment on current events that apply to our field	Blog entry with tips to move forward in conflict Offer online conflict tool? For CR Day 2015, organize events for the public (movie screening with conflict theme? public talk (CBC centre stage at lunch?), city proclamation - high level bridge light up, media release		

Goal	Strategies	Tools	Budget	Timeline
Strengthen connections with other ADR organizations and partners Raise the profile of ADRIA in the ADR community	Take on the role of leader and partner in ADR activities in Alberta	Networking events		Ongoing
Influence government and policy makers	Be aware of public and/or government issues tied to the field of ADR and get involved in the public discussion	Meet with editorial boards Letters to the Editor at the Journal Meet with politicians News conference		18 months

Part 5: Evaluation

Some of our goals are more tangible than others. It will be easy to see within a year if we increase our membership, fill our courses, and have more corporate contracts, but harder to track the impact of educating the public about the value of ADR and making it the first choice of people in conflict. The table below indicates the concrete criteria we can use to evaluate the effectiveness of this Communications and Marketing plan.

TABLE: Tracking our progress

Goal	Measurements	November 2014	November 2015
ADRIA is the hub of ADR information and services in Alberta	• web traffic (monitored by Google Analytics) • come up as first option in online searches for ADR services • number of phone/email equiries to the office	TB see Appendix	
Promote ADR resources in Alberta			
Make ADR the first choice for the public Connect ADR professionals with the public	• amount of ADR work available in the province • use of the directory	unknown	
Promote professional designations and qualifications			
Demonstrate the value of ethical standards and practices			
Strengthen connections with other ADR organizations and partners Raise the profile of ADRIA in the ADR community			

Goal	Measurements	November 2014	November 2015
Influence government and policy makers	• media coverage		
Strengthen ADRIA as a membership organization	• newsletter openings/interactions • engagement through social media • attendance at events	average open rate: 44.8% / click rate: 11.6% FB: 10 followers / Linkedin 39 followers (low interaction on both)	
Retain and build membership across the province	• number of memberships	~500 (check exact number)	
Strengthen the long term sustainability of ADRIA as an organization	• financial bottom-line		
Promote ADRIA's courses and services	• course offerings and number of students • number of corporate contracts		
Promote the value we offer members and clients			

Summary

The ADR Institute of Alberta wants to promote not only our services, but also ADR in general. Our focus is on providing value to our members, and in doing so we need to spread the word about the benefits of the work we do to a wider audience, including the public and the corporate world. We want everyone to think “ADR First” when faced with conflict, potential conflict, or a difficult decision.

There are is a lot of potential for ADRIA to reach engage new people in new ways. We will start with improving the tools we already use and need, and then expand into new areas.

Our communications and marketing strategies are ever evolving. We will continue to measure our tangible results, and work with staff, Board, volunteers, and members to find new ideas and opportunities for marketing.

Appendix

Search Engine Optimization test - October 6, 2014

Google Search conducted using Firefox private search (to avoid being affect by past search history):

ADRIA is #1 on first page of search results:

Edmonton Arbitrator

How do I become a mediator Alberta

How do I become a mediator Edmonton

How do I become an arbitrator Alberta

ADRIA website shows up on the first page of search results for:

Edmonton Mediator

Calgary Mediator

Alberta mediator

Edmonton Mediation

Calgary mediation

Alberta mediation

Find a mediator in Alberta

Find a mediator in Calgary

Find a mediator in Edmonton

Calgary Arbitrator

Find an arbitrator in Alberta

Red Deer Arbitrator: 2012 Directory pdf shows up on page 2

dispute resolution Alberta

Dispute resolution Edmonton

dispute resolution Calgary

Professional development Edmonton

How do I resolve a conflict at work Alberta

Conflict resolution courses Edmonton: #4 (Certificate in Conflict leadership page ranks after NAIT, ACDS, MRJC)

conflict resolution courses Calgary

How do I become a mediator Calgary

First 5 pages of web results:

Find a mediator in Red Deer: 2013 directory pdf shows on page 4

Dispute resolution Alberta

corporate training Edmonton

NOT showing up in first five pages of search results:

Find a mediator in Fort McMurray

Find a mediator in Lethbridge

Professional development Calgary

corporate training Calgary

Other searches:

what is ADR? ADRIC is #5 on first page of search results

Find a Mediator Canada: ADRIC's home page is #3 on the first page, but it's ADR Connect directory is not showing. ADRIA's home page is on page 4.

Observations:

-often AFMS and Alberta Courts rank higher than ADRIA in search results

-search results often rank higher in Edmonton than in Calgary

-ADRIA is not showing up in searches for ADR services in small cities around the province

-ADRIA's current Directory of Arbitrators and Mediators is not coming up in searches for "Find a mediator" (just the home page is)

-ADRIA's PDF directories from past years are still available online and appear in search results higher than the current directory

-for some search results, for example Calgary Mediation, ADRIA is only showing up because of our website's "links" page (in other words, our content is not generating Calgary information/searches/ interest, we just happen to have a link to the Calgary Mediation Society)

-ADRIC's "ADR Connect" directory of members is not ranking well in searches to find a mediator or arbitrator in our province of the country

-the updates already made to the home page of ADRIA's website are showing up in searches with the key words highlighted ("find", "mediator" etc.)