2010-11 CIMMYT Marketing Plan

1. branding.

1.0 DEFINITION OF TERMS

For the purposes of this document, consider the terms *marketing*, *communicating*, and *branding* to be synonyms. These verbs all refer to the *actions* which establish the personality or identity of CIMMYT with external audiences.

1.1 BRANDING SUMMARY

CIMMYT's core communication weakness is excess. Too much information, directed at too many audiences, too frequently. Our copy is wordy and jargon-filled. Our visual style is busy and cluttered. We are overly literal and descriptive. In trying to do too much, we create our own white noise.

Our challenge is to re-organize CIMMYT communication without alienating existing audiences, including internal ones.

Our task is to prioritize CIMMYT communication and devise ways to reach the audience which can best help us accomplish our goals.

First, we must better organize ourselves and our communication. Prioritize. Synthesize. Simplify. Do fewer things better.

Next, we must strive to communicate in a way that moves people.

This plan offers a vision and a strategy for CIMMYT to meet these challenges and communicate in a more powerful way.

1.2 BRAND CONCEPT

CIMMYT communication wil be oriented to reinforce a single theme: *People Overcoming Adversity*.

Our brand is not our logo. CIMMYT's brand is what our audiences think of us. Edelman's Annual Trust Barometer has shown public trust in NGOs has grown even as it has decreased for other institutions such as government and corporations.

This is our theme. It is our archetype. We will reinforce this idea through text, video, and photos. We will bring it to life through the stories we tell.

The core CIMMYT story is not about farmers or farming. Not even of wheat or maize or Borlaug or hunger. It is the story of ordinary people overcoming extraordinary odds through ingenuity, hard work, and determination. It is what Borlaug's story *means*. It is the story of the poor farmer in his field, of the dedicated scientist in the lab, and it remains the story of a group of people in Mexico -- among other unlikely places -- trying to stave off a massive humanitarian crisis.

This where we want to engage people, communicating powerfully about the extraordinary, indomitable human spirit at the core of CIMMYT's work.

A word on science: CIMMYT's credibility relies on its commitment to science. Our communication should never undermine our scientific ethic. Doing so would destroy CIMMYT credibility and, thereby, damage our most important communication asset. However, we will not communicate *exclusively* as scientists. We will engage the imagination.

Case in point: When we ask people to support CIMMYT projects we are asking them to envision something *that hasn't happened yet*. This is, by definition, an act of imagination. We are prompting our audience to engage in a creative act. We need to communicate, intentionally, with that goal in mind.

We want to move people, not simply inform them. And certainly not to bury them in information and statitistics.

1. branding.
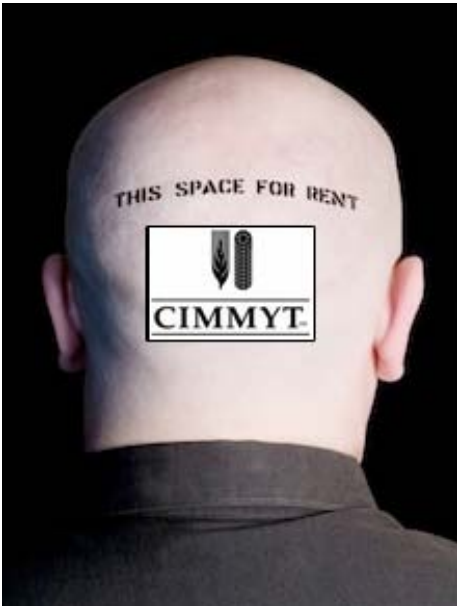
Did you look at this picture and read this caption before anything else? Maybe the headline? Most people do.

1.3 BRAND EMPHASIS

CIMMYT must communicate across diverse cultures and languages. Given the inherent complexity of that task, we will increase emphais on three aspects of communications: (1) Headlines, leads and captions, (2) Pictures, and (3) Stories.

Headlines, leads, and captions:

Most people read by scanning the headline and first paragraph, looking at pictures, and reading captions. We need to pay extra attention to these elements. Though body copy will be edited as tightly as possible, the emphasis will be on making the aforementioned components exceptional. Headlines will be descriptive and succinct. We will use simple words, not professional language. Key messages will be designed to mimic headlines. We will make our captions more emotive and direct. Our leads will be strong and incor-

porate journalistic standards such as the inverted pyramid for news and nut graphs for features.

Pictures:

We will increase use of photographs and video. These elements communicate emotion powerfully. We will strive to present images that move people, for metaphor. Too many of CIMMYT's photos look static or staged. A man standing in front of a wheat field tells us very little. We want to see his eyes, his hands, the lines in his face. We want to tell his story through the images we select.

Likewise, CIMMYT will increase its use of data graphics (maps, graphs, etc.) to explain complex issues. Multi-variate informaiton is difficult to communicate through text. A well-constructed picture is often the best way to communicate complexity.

Stories:

This is perhaps the most importatn point of emphasis: *we will tell more stories*. And storytelling will inform the way we use both words and images.

There is an idea from psychology called the narrative paradigm. It boils down to this: People understand their own life through stories. Stories are the building blocks of personal identity.

In order to move people, we must become better story tellers. And there is no shortage of compelling stories here at CIMMYT. And by choosing stories that reflect our institutional values we attract like-minded people. We want to build a

tribe of people who share our values and support our work. Telling our stories powerfully allows us to create a consistent identity, both internally and externally, across communication channels and countries. Narrative transcends all cultures and language. Stories incite action and are better remembered than statistics.

1.4 BRAND LANGUAGE

Most of CIMMYT marketing is descriptive. We want to extend description into metaphor. We will describe into a way that makes people *feel*.

At worst, CIMMYT communication is destructively literal. Language such as "livestock and agricultural systems of production" prompts suspicion in the reader. Why? Not simply because the languagage is obtuse and abstract (it is) but, more importantly, because it *mimics the euphemisms employed by government and industry to mask uncomfortable truths*. CIMMYT's appropriation of this type of professional language makes people think we are hiding something when we are not. And it's a destructive liability on GMO issues where we will need to create a new vocabulary to describe our work.

We want to engage people in a vocabulary that is far less fraught. CIMMYT cannot affort to sound like Monsanto or the World Bank. There must be differentiation in our communication. We must consider the audience in our communication and meet them where they live. These same concepts apply equally to our visual vocabulary.

2. markets.

Did you look at this picture and read this caption before anything else? Maybe the headline? Most people do.

2.0 KEY MARKETS

CIMMYT marketing efforts will focus on three audiences this year: 1. Employees, 2. Alumni, and 3. Donors and media in the United States.

These are the priority audiences because they are the most critical for donors and revenue. We will communicate globally, but priority will be given to these audiences regarding assets, budgets, and manpower.

Additional audiences to consider as the year matures include: Mexico, India, Scandanavia, and other European countries.

2.1 SEGMENTATION

We know our primary institutional funders (Gates Foundatio, USAID, Cornell, etc.) but we have few metrics or psychographics currently available for CIMMYT segmentation.

The best data we have is from CIMMYT.org and though it is a useful starting point, it is likely not statistically relevant due to our low traffic statistics. Based on Internet averages, the site is visited more frequently by users 25-34, who have no children, are graduate school educated, and who browse from work. CIMMYT is also strong with ages 35-44 and weak with ages 18-24. Our audience is divided equally between women and men. Visitors view 1.5 unique pages per day, on average, spend 46 seconds on each page view, and a total of two minutes on the site per visit.

Given this profile and the dominant search terms that bring visitors to CIMMYT ("CIMMYT," "kalimat persuasif," and "maize") we can assume those visiting the site already know CIMMYT. We are not bringing new people to the site and we have work to do to make it "stickier."

We will accrue more about our key audiences in the coming year. As we bring more people to our site, we will learn who they are and what resonates.

2.2 MARKETING BASELINE

To establish a baseline, we will compare CIMMYT with 5 other organizations: the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI); International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI); World Food Programme (WFP); Food & Agriculture Organization (FAO); and the World Bank.

Though not direct competitors we will measure our media presence and web traffic against these peer organizations. Below are current Web and media metrics comparing CIMMYT with these organizations:

Organization	Traffic Rank	Sites Linking To
CIMMYT	733,080	332
IFPRI	368,485	1,103
IRRI	249,363	569
WFP	53, 516	3,897
FAO	7,623	14,589
World Bank	7,108	13,084

Organization	Media Stories*	Audience*
CIMMYT	725	167,062,654
IFPRI	1,762	955,467,229
IRRI	1,818	632,223,283
WFP	47,591	48,876,574,180
FAO	46,944	20,714,646,203
World Bank	124,459	101,271,618,478

* Media & Audience from Jan.-June 2010

2.3 SWOT ANALYSIS

Strengths:
1. Borlaug legacy and institutional history, 2. Strong scientific ethic, 3. Well-regarded by key constituents, 4. Strong committment to mission.

Weaknesses:
1. Institution not well known among public, 2. Mexico poor location for global communication activities, 3. Distributed communication structure/budgeting not conducive to communication goals, 4. Core issues and technology are highly complex.

Opportunities:
1. External trends driving interest and urgency of hunger issues, 2. No NGO "owns" pro-GMO argument, 3. Potential to make enormous global impact, 4. No direct competitor for maize and wheat.

2. markets.

Threats:
1. Partnerships with companies like Monsanto have the potential to undermine credibility. 2. GMO is a combustible issue. 3. Possibility of private companies competing more directly with CIMMYT. 4. External factors (climate change, ecological scarcity and degradation, food prices) affect work beyond CIMMYT control. 5. It is crucial that CIMMYT scales to meet global challenges.

2.4 CHANNELS

CIMMYT's marketing channels include: *Earned media:* public and media relations, bylined articles, OpEds, PSAs, and public speaking; *Paid media:* advertising, event marketing, satellite media tours, matte releases, and press releases; *Social media:* YouTube, Twitter, CIMMYT's blog, Facebook, and BlipTV; *Publications & collateral*; *Web marketing*: search engine optimization, Google ad words, e-appeals, CIMMYT.org; *Government affairs*; and *Customized donor communications*. We will continue to use all of these channels to meet the goals we set for ourselves, however, for the next year we will focus most heavily on earned and social media because they offer the best low-cost, high-impact activities.

2.5 KEYS TO SUCCESS

CIMMYT has tremendously talented people and a full complement of resources to be a more effective marketing organization. As the saying goes, the urgent is the enemy

OUR SUCCESS DEPENDS ON OUR SELF-DISCIPLINE AND THE ABILITY TO ORGANIZE OURSELVES TO MEET OUR GOALS

of the important. Once we establish a clear plan and commit to a set of communication objectives we must implemnt them with discipline. We must say "no" to things that do not fit and continually bring institutional focus back to the priority goals. Successful institutional communication must be supported and emphasized by the executive management team.

The primary barrier to success is the manner in which CIMMYT plans and budgets its communication activities. Currently, communication budgets are distributed. This puts communication strategy and decision-making in the hands of scientists and establishes a de facto emphasis on project-level communication. In order to communicate on an institutional level and strategically plan CIMMYT communication we will need to change the way we plan and budget for communication. This will be discussed later in the plan in more detail.

3. strategies.

3.0 PRINCIPLES

We will not organize our communication in the same manner in which we organize our work. The task is different.

We will not underestimate the principles of process, packaging, and preparation which underscore successful communication.

We will seek to "own the show" and aggregate marketing resources around bigger, prioritized initiatives rather than initiate a host of smaller, lower impact initiatives.

We will saturate key markets.

We will become "greener" in our communications (recycled paper, soy-based ink, etc.) as climate change is a key emphasis of our messaging.

We will not worry about the logo or name. Yet.

We won't go on the offensive with a pro-GMO argument. Yet.

We will not be dogmatic. We will use our best judgement and measure objectively. Things that don't work will be discarded. Things that work will be scaled whenever possible.

3.1 MESSAGES

CIMMYT's key messages must be built upon it's core identity. Every message coming out of CIMMYT must reinforce the theme, mission, and values.

Mission: To sustainably increase the productivity of maize and wheat systems to ensure global food security and reduce poverty.

Values: Innovative, Ethical, Compassionate, Trustworthy, Pragmatic

Theme: People Overcoming Resistance.

Key Message: We work tirelessly to help poor farmers grow more wheat and maize.

Again, these are concepts to be reinforced, guidelines to aid decision-making. These are not verbatim marketing messages.

3.2 BUDGETS

Much of the information below is difficult to parse given current systems. The remainder of the fiscal year will be used to establish protocols that allow us to get a baseline going into 2011. CIMMYT needs to understand where and how it is investing its marketing budget.

Channel	2010	2011	2012
Paid Media	$	$	$
Web Marketing	$	$	$
Earned Media	$	$	$
Social Media	$	$	$
Collateral	$	$	$
Gov. Affairs	$	$	$
Donor Comms.	$	$	$
Events	$	$	$
Totals			

Markets	2010	2011	2012
U.S	$	$	$
Swiss	$	$	$
Germany	$	$	$
India	$	$	$
Australia	$	$	$
Mexico	$	$	$
Canada	$	$	$
UK	$	$	$
Totals			

Adhering to core principles and creating a way to track and evaluate our communications work will make us all happier.

Project	2010	2011	2012
Seeds of Discovery	$	$	$
BISA	$	$	$
Seed Bank	$	$	$
DTMA	$	$	$
Wheat Yield/Rust	$	$	$
Mexican Initiative	$	$	$
CA	$	$	$
Totals			

3.3 EVALUATION

In addition to the institutional metrics/baseline discussed in section 2.2, individual marketing efforts will be measured against these goals:
• Increase in donations
• Increase in web traffic
• Increase in media impressions
• Increase in number of new donors

As time goes on and our marketing becomes increasingly sophisticated, metrics will be refined to include more precise measurements such as bounce rate, page views, time on site, key words, conversations, rretweets, etc., as projects demand.

4.0 STRATEGY

We need to create a more cohesive communications team before aggressively marketing externally. Specific programs to build a communications foundation and to communicate externally are elaborated below.

4.1 CENTRALIZE CIMMYT MARKETING

CIMMYT functions as a distributed marketing organization. The strategic decisions are made in the field, at the local level, and executed by communications team members with vendor support. If CIMMYT communication sounds like it was designed by scientists, essentially, it was.

A distributed communications function works for a small organization or for a very large, fully staffed, mature organization (think: Proctor & Gamble). For a mid-sized, complex organization like CIMMYT, the structure is a poor one. ***This is the single biggest issue facing CIMMYT communications.*** If we don't centralize strategic planning and budgeting, especially in the face of potentially rapid growth, the CIMMYT brand will become increasingly fragmented, communications increasingly cluttered (think: microsites, contradictory collateral, confused messaging), and we will create a series of redundant and expensive structures. (A more comprehensive version of this argument it is attached as an appendix at the end of this document).

CIMMYT needs to create a stronger foundation for communications outreach.

CENTRALIZE CIMMYT MARKETING (No Budget Required)

A. Objectives:
• Create and implement a plan for centralizing communications budgets and strategy

B. Research needed:
• List of people to meet with

C. Activities and Programs:
• Create draft plan
• Meet with key stakeholders to refine plan
• Implement plan

D. Audience:
• Internal

E: Tactics:

Activity/Program	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	Resources Needed
Draft Plan		x											**Listman, Cutter**
Meet With Stakeholders & Refine Plan		x	x	x									**Listman, Cutter**
Implement Plan					x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	**Listman, Cutter**

CENTRALIZING CIMMYT MARKETING: No cost

Next steps:

Create/implement way to devise amount CIMMYT invests in marcom; who to speak with in accounting?

Need to meet with Leonor Herradura (Ninay) sometime in November.

Need to get with Mike and map out way of 1) Better costing chargebacks 2) Creating a la carte costing 3) Mapping time/resources to projects, ad hoc, or core for entire department (via Marianne).

Also need to figure out expected deliverables for the year from programs.

Ann suggests meeting with Drs Prasanna (GMP) and Bekele (SEP) to sell "big ideas"

4. programs. INVESTING INTERNALLY.

6.2 FORMALIZE AN INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS PROGRAM ($120,000)

CIMMYT needs a strong internal communication program. Because the communications team and structure is distributed there is a need to reinforce the institutional messages and protocols.

A. Objectives:
• Assure all internal audiences understand the marketing plan and key messages to be communicated externally. Or, put another way, cement our institutional identity, vocabulary, and stories internally before rolling them out externally.

B. Research needed:
• Need plan for "green" printing (recycled paper, etc.)
• Need to create/codify key messages at institutional and programmatic level.

C. Activities and Programs
• Finalize marketing plan
• Develop/refine brand toolkit (press kit, style guide, logo guidelines, "sacred" stories, etc.)
• Host annual meeting of CIMMYT communicators
• Create and distribute an annual report
• Sell marketing concepts/plan to all employees through comms team (i.e. Train the trainer)
• Revise Informa to a monthly newsletter with a renewed focus on reinforcing core identity
• Add brand training for new hires
• Hold monthly calls for comms team
• Bi-weekly interviews with CIMMYT staff posted on site

D. Evaluation
• Create before/after test for brand training

E. Audience:
• Internal

F. Tactics:

Activity/Program	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	Resources Needed
Finalize Marketing Plan	x	x											Cutter
Develop & Refine Brand Toolkit		x	x	x									Cutter,
Annual Communications Meeting				x									Listman, Cutter
Create Annual Report			x	x	x								Cutter
Train the Trainer					x	x	x	x	x	x	x		Comms Team
Brand Training for New Hires					x	x	x	x	x	x	x		TBD
Monthly Comms Calls					x	x	x	x	x	x	x		Listman, Cutter
Bi-weekly Interviews on CIMMYT.org				x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		Cutter and Comms Team
Create corporate video & montage											x	x	TBD

FORMALIZING A COMMUNICATIONS PROGRAM: $120,000

Next steps:

Finalize plan for green printing

Key message development
>   Schedule meetings with Department heads
>   Follow-up media training

Develop/refine brand toolkit ($10,000)
>   Elements include:
>>   Boilerplate (for press releases, emails, etc.)
>>   Style Guide/Identity Guide
>>   Press kit
>>   Backgrounder
>>   Standard presentation
>>   Need to define approval process
>>   Will need help from graphics team

Host annual meeting of CIMMYT communicators ($40,000 budget)
>   In January
>   Need to finalize participants and send invitations
>   Will need admin support
>   Weekly departmental meetings

Create and distribute an annual report ($30,000)
>   Need to draft Creative Brief
>   Need to identify team and hold initial meeting
>   This budget assumes a modest print run and distribution

Sell marketing concepts/plan to all employees through comms team (No cost)
>   This will happen, initially, at the annual comms meeting

Add brand training for new hires (No cost)
>   Roll this in after annual meeting but need to start talking to HR soon

Hold monthly calls for comms team ($5,000)
>   Do we have a provider for conference calls

Bi-weekly interviews with CIMMYT staff posted on site ($15,000)
>   Need to draft a list of interviewees and schedule (co-incide with Story Project)
>   Need to work with Web team to dedicate space on homepage
>   Budget is for additional photography/video we may have to commission

Create corporate video and montage ($20,000)
>   This won't happen until toward the end of the fiscal year, using assets, primarily, we've accumulated through the year
>   Budget will be for additional vendor help as needed: video, editing, etc.

6.3 THE STORY PROJECT ($150,000)

The Story Project aims to capitalize on CIMMYT's strong alumni ties. By creating a series of compelling stories we will roll out a program asking CIMMYT alumni for donations and/or to encourage like-minded people to sign up for CIMMYT email. Simultaneously, we will package these stories for the web, media, and other channels.

A. Objectives:
• Increase CIMMYT donors, donations, web, and media presence by rolling out a story once a month

B. Research needs:
• Identify 12 key stories/editorial calendar for 2011

C. Activities and programs
• Create editorial calendar
• Assign reporting resources for first six stories
• Identify photo and video needs
• Perform data hygiene on alumni contact list
• Assure infrastructure for supporting e-mail blasts, donations, video hosting
• Edit first three stories
• Press briefings in US and UK
• Story Project launch

D. Evaluation
• Increase in traffic to CIMMYT.org
• Increase in CIMMYT presence in blogosphere/social media properties (traffic, links, mentions)
• Increase in CIMMYT donations
• Increase in CIMMYT email list
• Increase in CIMMYT media mentions

E. Audience:
• CIMMYT Alumni

F. Tactics:

Activity/Program	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	Resources Needed
Create Editorial Calendar		x	x	x									**Listman, Cutter**
Assign Reporting Resources		x	x	x									**Listman, Cutter**
Identify Photo & Video Needs		x	x	x									**Listman, Cutter**
Data Hygiene on Alumni List		x	x	x	x	x							**TBD**
Assure Infrastructure		x	x	x	x	x							**TBD**
Edit First Three Stories			x	x	x								**Listman, Cutter**
Press Briefings in US and UK						x							**TBD**
Story Project Launch							x	x	x	x	x	x	**Comms Team**

THE STORY PROJECT: $150,000

Next Steps:

Need to identify core team; regular meetings

Editorial calendar (proposed): ($10,000/story)
  March Seed bank: Cutter
    Interviews:
    Needs: high quality photos of seed, seed bank, equipment; video; infographic?
  April BISA: Cutter
    Interviews:
    Needs: Chris to schedule trip via Ajai. Video, photos, etc.
  May DTMA: Ann?
    Interviews:
    Needs:
  June Conservation Agriculture: Paola?
    Interviews:
    Needs:
  July Making Hunger Real: Cutter
    Interviews:
    Needs:
  August Country focus: Zimbabwe: Cutter
    Interviews:
    Needs:
  September Country focus: China:
    Interviews:
    Needs:
  October Borlaug
    Interviews: (maybe Dennis, alum, in Canada, can help?)
    Needs: Interview schedules; photos/video of Nobel Prize
  November Country focus: Mexico
    Interviews:
    Needs:
  December Seeds of Discovery
    Interviews:
    Needs:
  January Mexican initiative
    Interviews:
    Needs:
  Need to define approval process
  Tell us your stories feedback, story bank

Vendor support for distribution, analytics, and research ($22,000)
  Meltwater News (clipping service/database) $10,000/year
  PR Newswire (media database and press release distribution) $12,000/year

Data hygiene on list (Assumes no additional cost)
  Timeline
  Do we need vendor support

Opt out/opt in
Do we need to look at list-buying

Tech check (Assumes no additional cost)
Distribution to list: Do we need vendor support
Home page real estate
Video hosting (or YouTube)
Donations: PayPal? Legal or compliance issues?
Web analytics

Social media strategy (Assumes no additional cost)
Photo of the Day via Twitter, top 10, top 5
Facebook role
Organizing concepts and strategies for social media

Press tour ($5,000)
Proposed cities: Washington DC, New York, London
Book internally; start organizing in November

4. programs.

6.4 QUARTERLY PROJECTS

Starting in March 2011 we will create a *dense-pack* marketing event every three months. The events will then be March, June, September, and December. CIMMYT will aggregate resources and focus on a single message/project through all its marketing channels at the same moment. Again, the primary emphasis will be on media and social marketing.

Proposed events:

March: BISA

June: Making hunger real

Create an event to make the idea of hunger *less abstract*. Rank all the countries in the world by which farmers have to work the hardest and which have it easiest. Take metrics like: time in field to cultivate, to harvest, fertilizer price and availability, market (or not) mechanisms available, yields, insurance, climates, etc. Which farmers work the hardest to get the least? Which are the

most efficient/effective? This report would be similar to the reports FAO and WFP create ranking the world's hungriest countries. Possibly create an advocacy action for CIMMYT supporters. Again, roll this out in London or New York or DC. Sell it in to key journalists, under embargo, on a press tour before the press event. Mail journalists and bloggers a bag full of food that contains the average daily intake of someone in India. Take away the abstract. Push out through other marketing channels at the same time.

September: CIMMYT: The Borlaug Legacy

To mark the anniversary of Dr. Borlaug's death create a documentary/short film to illustrate his legacy and highlight the challenges of today. Sometimes, CIMMYT communication about Dr. Borlaug borders on hagiography. This project will leverage Dr. Borlaug's story to illustrate his values in modern-day CIMMYT. We can highlight the drama of the Green Revolution to point for a critical need for a second one. We will interview CIMMYT staff, scientists, farmers, and those involved with the first Green Revolution. This passage alone, taken from Borlaug's Wikipedia page, contains enough drama for half a documentary: "*250 tons went to Pakistan and 200 to India. They encountered many obstacles. Their first shipment of wheat was held up in Mexican customs and so could not be shipped from the port at Guaymas in time for proper planting. Instead, it was sent via a 30-truck convoy from Mexico to the U.S. port in Los Angeles, encountering delays at the*

Mexico - United States border. Once the convoy entered the U.S., it had to take a detour, as the U.S. National Guard had closed the freeway due to Watts riots in Los Angeles. When the seeds reached Los Angeles, a Mexican bank refused to honor Pakistan treasury's payment of US$100,000, because the check contained three misspelled words. Still, the seed was loaded onto a freighter destined for Bombay, India, and Karachi, Pakistan. Twelve hours into the freighter's voyage, war broke out between India and Pakistan over the Kashmir region. Borlaug received a telegraph from the Pakistani minister of agriculture, Malik Khuda Bakhsh Bucha: 'I'm sorry to hear you are having trouble with my check, but I've got troubles, too. Bombs are falling on my front lawn. Be patient, the money is in the bank.'"

By creating this in-house we have the option of cutting it into compelling bits for the web, or trying to sell it to PBS, Discovery, or similar TV outlet. We can hold an exclusive online "premiere" for our supporters and market the movie itself as a product to journalists, bloggers, and through other channels.

December: Mexican Initiative

Other possible dense-pack ideas:

Mystery of maize
Seeds of Discovery
Seed Warriors movie
Fundraising events

Which CIMMYT priorities will eventually become focal points remains to be seen and requires more consultation. However, the basic framework of focusing on one large initiative per quarter remains.

DENSE PACK EVENTS ($200,000)

A. Objective:
• To increase CIMMYT's web and media profile with high-visibility events once a quarter.

B. Research needs:
• Need to identify candidates for four 2011 events

C. Activities and programs:
• Finalize four projects
• Create plan
• Events

D. Evaluation:
• Increase in traffic to CIMMYT.org
• Increase in CIMMYT presence in blogosphere/social media
• Increase in CIMMYT media mentions

E. Audience:
• Targeted media and web audiences

F. Tactics:

Activity/Program	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	Resources Needed
Finalize four projects	x	x											**Listman, Cutter**
Create Plan		x	x										**Listman, Cutter**
Events						x			x				**Comms Team**

DENSE PACK EVENTS ($200,000)/ $50,000 per event

Need to identify core team/create six-month planning cycle

Define BISA focus/plan and needs
Define Making Hunger Real focus/plan and needs
Start creative brief on Borlaug movie

5.0 THE CASE FOR CENTRALIZED PLANNING & BUDGETING

I'd like to raise concerns about the way we plan and budget for marketing/communications.

I understand there is a core budget that sits with Mike which primarily covers fixed costs (personnel, equipment, etc.).

Additionally, there are variable communication budgets that sit with each program area and manifest themselves in the form of "charge backs" for program communications work.

If this is correct, the majority of CIMMYT's communication budget is distributed and effectively sits in the program areas.

This is an issue.

I've worked within different structures -- centralized and distributed-- and both have their strengths and weaknesses. A distributed model (meaning where decisions are made in the field/program, with central communication support) is the wrong model for CIMMYT now.

The distributed model is good for small organizations. It limits needless bureaucracy and enables localized decision-making. It's nimble. It can adapt to changing conditions on the ground. It is the best system for a start-up or new company.

The distributed model is also good for large, mature organizations with differentiated product lines or portfolios of work. Proctor and Gamble (with Crest, Pringles, and Mr. Clean) is a good example, with each brand having its own communications function. Greenpeace functions well under a distributed model. In these cases, there is a strong, dedicated comms staff to each distributed function.

However, CIMMYT is a medium-sized organization with a high degree of complexity. It has a relatively small comms staff worldwide. A distributed model is devestating to CIMMYT marketing. **In a distributed model:**

• Marketing decisions are made at the project level.
• The relevant questions are: How can I reach my audience? How can I support my project goals?
• Marketing work isn't prioritized. It's aggregated into a big portfolio and sorted temporally. Priority becomes whatever is next.
• Corporate communications acts as the "agency" sitting at the end of an assembly line, executing task after task. Program management queues up for support. There is little strategic intent.
• Initially, this model serves an organization well but as the organization matures, communication begins to break down.
• The communications staff becomes overwhelmed and overworked trying to serve a growing organization.
• Program managers grow frustrated with the inability of the communications staff to adequately meet its needs.
• Program managers begin to look outside the organization to vendors to complete tasks. Or to argue for their own comms staff to support program work.
• Shared corporate communication areas (i.e. the web site, Twitter, blogs, annual reports) become increasingly cluttered, confusing, and unmanageable.
• Again, in these shared spaces, a frustrated program management looks for solutions outside the organization (micro-sites, program blogs, individual reports, individuated branding for projects/programs).

What I've described is what CIMMYT looks like today. If CIMMYT marketing feels like it was written and designed by scientists, effectively, it was.

These are all signs the current structure is stressed. Eventually, this will lead to a system with unnecessary fixed costs, duplication, and confusion (i.e. three web vendors on contract, two ad agencies on retainer) and an increasingly fragmented, inconsistent, and contradictory set of messages going out to overlapping external audiences.

The truth is this: Whoever controls the communication budget initiates communication projects and who has "final cut" on projects. In effect, by relying on a distributed model, CIMMYT has outsourced its marketing strategy to scientists.

To meet CIMMYT's communication goals, it needs to evolve:
• We need to move 80% of all the ***real*** communication budget into a central account controlled by corporate communications.
• The communications structure needs to be centralized. (worldwide

"CIMMYT can't afford to sit idle. We need to move to a model of centralized communications planning and budgeting. The current system is unsustainable."

staff managed centrally, centralized planning, centralized budgeting, etc.)

I understand this is a disruptive argument, but, in my experience **nothing** will have a bigger impact on CIMMYT's communications goals than this. Not the logo, or the corporate identity system, not a great marketing campaign, not celebrity involvement, nothing. *Why*?
• It changes the working question from: What is best for my project? To: What is best for CIMMYT?
• It allows prioritization amongst communication work.
• The majority of CIMMYT marketing is always going to be supportingprogram work but there is a question of prioritization and one of scale. (And these relate directly to managing opportunity costs.)

For example, let's assume out of CIMMYT's 160 projects, approximately 1/3 receive some type of comms support. Let's assume it totals about $2 million annually in real budget terms. What does that $2 million buy? About a message per week going out with little strategic intent. Most messages will be, necessarily, localized and project-based. They may be (and likely are) overlapping, confusing, and contradictory in the aggregate.

I am arguing for this: Take that same $2 million dollars and asking: How can we best use this money to achieve CIMMYT goals?

This will require shifting focus, over time, from supporting 50 projects, to really investing in 3-5 programs/initiatives/projects. Will this mean we will "play favorites?" Yes. Will this mean that projects that are used to

getting comms support will get less or none? Necessarily.

However, my argument is this: That by moving to this approach those same project managers will see greater benefit over time. CIMMYT will become better known with stakeholders (media, policymakers, funders) allowing improved opportunities for all CIMMYT work. Additionally, we will raise more unrestricted money, which everyone likes.

I understand this will be disruptive. I further understand that this will frustrate program managers. However, I assume program managers are frustrated with the level of service they are getting now. If we continue with the current model that frustration will only increase as CIMMYT continues to grow.

CIMMYT can't afford to sit idle. We need to move to a model of centralized communications planning and budgeting. The current system is unsustainable.

I sincerely believe this is the best system for CIMMYT going forward. I look forward to discussing this more with all of you. I've talked with Mike about this as well and he is in complete agreement. He noted that senior management has been exploring ways to move away from the chargeback system and I'd like to work with Mike on moving away from that system and toward the model advocated above.

Thank you, all.
Chris.