



Factsheet 2: **Events**

Accessible and inclusive communications are vital to promote events, sessions or activities to disabled people. The chances are that many potential participants have not been able to access your event information. The Equality Act 2010 also requires all organisations to make reasonable adjustments to meet the needs of disabled people. There are so many communication channels to use, but to promote your events more effectively you need to understand your audiences' preferences. This will save you time and money.

Planning: Create an inclusive communications policy

The best way to embed inclusive communications across your organisation is to develop an inclusive communications policy that clearly sets out your commitment to inclusion. When you are trying to promote events to reach more disabled people you should consider:

- Who do you want to reach?
- What media channels do they use?
- What are their access requirements?
- Anticipate the needs of different audiences

For more information about how to develop your policy see our **Inclusive Communications Guide** available on our website.



Media

You can use PR to promote your event to disabled people via local, regional and national press and broadcast media. It's worth remembering that traditional media channels are often favoured by older audiences. A well-written press release accompanied by a good action photo will often result in some good local/regional media coverage. Ensure that your language is positive and inclusive, and make sure it is also talking to the right audience. For example, not every disabled person wants to or aspires to be a Paralympian, so a headline like 'Calling all future Paralympians' will not necessarily target the widest group of people.

We have a useful **Media Guide** for those who write news. It includes advice on language, formatting and imagery. You can access it on Activity Alliance's website.

Social media

Social media platforms like Twitter, Facebook and Instagram offer a great free way to reach your audiences. It can also be a useful tool to target disabled people. Advertising on social media is a great way of reaching new audiences. You can use a mix of boosted posts and targeted display adverts, both of which can provide an extremely cost-effective way of increasing your reach.

E-newsletters

Email can be a very accessible and inclusive communication channel. Accessible e-newsletters are a great tool if you have a database or contact list of potential participants.

There are many free or low cost programmes such as Mail Chimp, Market Mailer or GetResponse that can instantly professionalise the look and feel of your e-newsletter. You should apply the guidance on website accessibility to e-newsletters. The World Wide Web Consortium good rule of thumb is to ensure that the layout of the template is not overly complicated. People accessing your e-newsletter via a screen reader device will find it more difficult the more complicated the layout is. Clear, properly labelled and formatted headings are also critical and it is best practice to offer HTML and plain text versions of your e-newsletter.



Websites and mobile apps

In our Lifestyle Report 2013, one of the questions disabled people were asked was, ‘how do you find information about interests and hobbies?’.

The most popular answer by a big margin was ‘Internet search sites’. So to promote events to disabled people make sure your website and web content is accessible.

Mobile apps are a great marketing communications tool and it is important to think about making your applications accessible to the widest possible audience. As it is a new and emerging technology there are some pitfalls to be avoided but also a lot of opportunities.

Printed event materials

There are lots of people who find printed documents difficult to access. This is why it is important to make your printed material as accessible and inclusive as possible as well as providing alternative formats.

These are some of the things you need to consider when producing a document for print and distribution:

- Font size and style
- Layout
- Plain English
- Use of images
- Colour choice and contrast
- Type of paper stock
- Size of document



- Length of document
- Information about alternative versions (language or format)
- Contact information



Work with influencers and amplifiers

There are many individuals and organisations who can help you to reach more disabled people to take part in your events. It could be individuals like local ambassadors, famous disabled people and relevant bloggers. Organisations like local disabled people’s networks, charities and clubs can have similar goals to you. You can then seek to work in partnership with them to promote events and activities to reach more disabled people.

Make accessible content for sharing on social media

All the content you share on social media should be accessible. This includes making sure all images have alt tags, videos have subtitles and documents are accessible (e.g. accessible PDFs). You should use jargon-free English and only direct to content on accessible websites. You will probably need external help with some content (e.g. Easy read, Braille).





Key points

- Create an inclusive communications policy
- Use a mix of communication channels to reach your target audience
- Create accessible content for sharing on social media
- Consider the physical accessibility of events



Resources and further information

We have produced many resources to support you to improve your communication and engagement. These are available, including our **Inclusive Communications Guide**, on Activity Alliance website.



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This document is available in Word format. Please contact us if you need support. Activity Alliance is the operating name for the English Federation of Disability Sport. Registered Charity no. 1075180

