



PRESENTATION OF RECTOR MAJOR'S REPORT

SOCIAL COMMUNICATION

1. OUR BASELINE

For Don Bosco, communication was “a very important part of our mission” (1885). The Constitutions insist: “This is a significant field of activity which constitutes one of the apostolic priorities of the Salesian mission. Our Founder had an instinctive grasp of the importance of this means of mass education, which creates culture and spreads patterns of life; he showed great originality in the apostolic undertakings which he initiated to defend and sustain the faith of the people” (C. 43).

1.1. Indications of the road traversed during the six-year period from 2008 to 2014

The **Salesian Social Communication System (SSCS 2011)** was updated.

All provinces appointed a **Delegate for SC**, but very few full-time.

A good number of provinces began to develop their **Provincial Communication Plan**.

There was a proposal for **formation to communication**.

An **adequate level of communication within the Congregation** was achieved.

Almost all provinces had an **institutional website**.

A variety of **communication structures** were maintained: publishers, bookshops, printers, cinema and radio centres.

It was difficult to change **an instrumentalist notion of communication**.

2. THE 2014 – 2020 SIX-YEAR PROJECT

The six-year Project was drawn up and developed following the **SSCS structure**.

2.1. Animation and formation: goals, processes/steps, challenges

The provinces began to get to know the SSCS during meetings of new provincials in Rome.

A few provinces appointed professional lay delegates (Acts 411) full-time.

There were continental, regional or conference-level meetings for delegates.

Provinces with full-time delegates saw quite significant growth.

A document was drawn up entitled: “*How to be present in social networks*” (Acts 423).

There has been growth in appropriate crisis communication.

Some provinces have begun to engage in institutional communication.

An increase in provinces with professionals in communication involved in their team and works.

Challenges: Delegates: full-time appointments with a team and the resources needed to carry out their task; six-year appointments to strengthen processes such as a provincial plan consistent with the OPP; involvement in annual regional meetings. The importance given to a press office, spokesperson and institutional communication. Sharing more regional/continental meetings with delegates from other sectors/departments.

The priority of the SSCS is the integral formation of Salesians such that they can learn to be evangelisers, educators and communicators like Don Bosco.

Two books were produced through the work of the World Advisory Council for Social Communication: “Topics for formation to communication” printed in 2015, and the e-book “What kind of Salesian communicators for young people in the digital world” in 2019.

Communication topics are offered in the various initial formation centres.

A number of formation houses have digital radio/video run by groups of ‘formandi’.

Formation to communication days have become one of the best practices in a number of provinces.

The SDB and FMA SC and Formation Departments, together with the FSC at the UPS and the Auxilium have consolidated their annual formation to communication days for male and female SDB and FMA in formation.

Challenges: Making communication part of the formation curriculum in the formation phases.

2.2. Information: goals, processes/steps and challenges

A notable increase in audio and video presentation of the Rector Major’s messages.

Variety of video formats for opening up content to an international and intercultural public which is not easy to satisfy: comics, documentaries, narratives, testimonies, interviews, etc.

Information is the area which is most developed and seen to at Salesian HQ.

A consistent team has been formed made up of Salesians and lay people.

Day-to-day information is passed on in six languages in ANS, SDB.org and social media.

The ANS Information Agency has been strengthened as a credible agency.

Support has been offered to Departments and the Secretariat for the Salesian Family.

The Feast of Mary Help of Christians and missionary expedition have been transmitted live.

With ANS, IME Communications, Multimedia and other partners we have enriched the communicative capacity of the Department and the ANS production team.

Table of statistics in general						
ANS Flickr 2014 - 2019		Photos		Number of times visited		
Visits of the Rector Major		11,114		56,051		
Team visits		862		3,530		
Bicentenary		7,756		36,540		
SF Days		2,289		21,736		
Languages (43)						
Amharic, Arabic, Bahasa Indonesia, Bengali, Belorussian, Catalan, Cebuano, Czech, Chinese Simplified, Chinese Traditional, German, English, Spanish, French, Hindi, Serbo-Croatian, Italian, Japanese, Khmer, Korean, Hungarian, Mongolian, Burmese, Dutch, Albanian, Nepali, Vietnamese, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Russian, Sadri, Samoan, Santali, Slovenian, Slovakian, Swahili, Tamil, Tetun, Tok Pisin, Thai, Ukramian, Urdu.						
Videos	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
	1	3	3	2	1	1
‘Dear confreres’ - editions	7,863	14,513	37,839	12,122	9,859	2,848
Strenna - editions		2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Strenna – seen by		25,362	22,187	38,118	38,128	410,111
Novena MHC - editions					2018	2019
Novena MHC – seen by					100,313	40,721

Challenges: Continuing growth in professionalism of teams, creating news from sources, creativity in video and the specific languages used by social media.

Salesian Bulletin: currently there are 66 editions in 31 languages in 132 countries around the world with an increase in online SBs and other digital editions.

Challenges: Planning the development and arrangements for the SB, as also migration of article content into digital languages for digital readers on their various digital platforms. Updating of publishing, administrative and marketing teams. Establishing a database: photos video and texts uploaded as material that can serve as input for print editions and digital content in the SB in all its editions.

The SDB.org site manages Internet resources as space for information, formation, sharing, and as a service for the project of animation and government of the Congregation.

One can find in the site official documentation concerning: Don Bosco, Salesian Holiness, i Rectors Major, General Council, Salesians, all Departments, the six Regions, Project Europe, multimedia galleries, a Salesian library in many languages.

2.3. Production and enterprises: goals, processes/steps and challenges

Regional publishing meetings for the exchange of experiences and best practice, awareness of new products, selling authors' rights.

Increase in quality of printed material, graphics and content offered and in choice of writers. Since 2009 a decrease in the production and sale of books. A complex of factors continues to place the publishing market in crisis, especially the market for religious and educational books.

Challenges: Investing in professional staff for production, administration and marketing. Looking for new writers able to offer human values and Christian thinking. Producing digital books in collaboration, adaptable to local cultures, especially religious material.

Radio is shifting from analogue to digital both by necessity and by law.

The majority of radios continue to be popular, missionary, educational and social service oriented. They enjoy great recognition and credibility from Church and society.

Some challenges: *Technical and professional updating of staff.* Finding alternative ethical models for economic sustainability. Integration and use of social networks.

2.4 Artistic and cultural heritage: goals, processes/steps and challenges

Including this area so as to begin creating awareness of the importance of preservation and promotion of artistic and cultural heritage in the Congregation, and doing so professionally and collaboratively.

3. MAIN CHALLENGES FOR THE FUTURE

Further updating the Salesian Social Communication System (2011) with particular attention to digital evolution and artificial intelligence.

Renewal of the structure and coordination of communication at Salesian HQ and animation and coordination of provinces.

Setting up and applying the plan for formation to communication for all Salesians, especially in initial phases (Communication and Formation together).

Preparation of Salesians who are specialised in pastoral and institutional communication in the provinces.

Full-time SDB or lay delegates (ACTS 411).

Systematic translation for the Department's daily services (ANS, Multimedia, SDB.org, social media, Salesian Bulletin).

Arriving at a more adequate solution for editing, producing, distributing, administering and sustaining the print and digital version of the SBe.

Setting up a digital platform for the sharing of the various resources in the Congregation.