

Merger and Acquisition Communications Checklist

I. STRATEGIC PLANNING

Once you decide to pursue a possible M&A transaction:

- With your communications lead, craft your key messaging platform to capture capabilities and benefits for each stakeholder group
- Create a capabilities presentation using your key messaging platform
- Start to map an internal and external communications plan to fit your M&A strategy and timeline
- If time allows, pursue thought leadership opportunities to promote company capabilities aligned with M&A target
- Identify vetted integration team of executives and primary points of contact from human resources, IT, public relations, operations, business development, and investor relations

II. M&A PREPARATION

When you enter an agreement to pursue a specific M&A transaction:

- Activate remaining integration team members
- Identify key points of contact with the other party's integration team. Agree on preferred communication methods to collaborate
- Determine the schedule for internal and external communications based on deal plans (due diligence, deal announcement, target closing date)

III. COUNTDOWN TO ANNOUNCEMENT DAY

About 60 days before Announcement Day:

- Circulate your Press Policy to employees
- Define process for internal and external communications creation, review, approval
- Confirm which integration team members will be at which location on Announcement Day. Make travel plans, as needed
- Assign ownership for communication assets:
 - Manager presentation and script
 - Employee emails and FAQs
 - Customer emails and call scripts
 - Customer/Public FAQs
 - Investor letters, emails, presentation
 - Press release
 - Website updates and social media posts
 - All Hands presentation for employees
 - HR employment and benefits documents

Four to six weeks before Announcement Day:

- Provide media training for spokespersons, as needed
- Finalize M&A key messaging platform and start drafting communication assets

- Start to build hourly schedule for Announcement Day
- Identify and collect contact information for key customers, investors

One week prior to Announcement Day:

- Finalize and approve communication assets and call-down lists/assignments
- Finalize Announcement Day schedule
- Prepare spokespersons with final FAQs
- Block calendars for anticipated press, analyst, customer, and investor calls

Day Before Announcement Day:

- Stage all Announcement Day communications
- Brief key managers and provide related communication assets
- If practical, share press release under embargo with trusted media contact(s)

IV. M&A ANNOUNCEMENT DAY

Internal Communications:

- Facilitate All Hands meeting, starting when the press release crosses the wires
- Send employee emails and post FAQs

External Communications:

- Publish press release to wire, both websites and social media accounts
- Send customer and investor emails
- Start customer and investor call-downs
- Facilitate media and analyst interviews

V. POST-ANNOUNCEMENT COMMUNICATIONS

Internal Communications:

- Hold daily, then weekly team check-ins to answer questions
- Make HR resources available to answer questions, facilitate conversations
- Collect anonymous questions and respond via email, intranet, or other channels

External Communications:

- Continue press and analyst meetings
- Conduct investor call
- Meet with key customers, partners
- Continue updates via thought leadership, press releases, social media, etc.

VI. CLOSE DAY AND BEYOND

- Publish “close” press release to wire, both websites and social media accounts
- Distribute employee and public FAQs with integration decisions and milestones
- Keep all stakeholders apprised of updated branding, leadership decisions, contact points, and milestones