



**Asia-Pacific  
Economic Cooperation**

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**2014/SOM1/005**  
Agenda Item: 8

## **Developing the APEC Communications Strategy 2014-2016**

Purpose: Information  
Submitted by: APEC Secretariat



**First Senior Officials' Meeting  
Ningbo, China  
27-28 February 2014**

## Executive Summary

The APEC Secretariat engaged a communications consulting firm, Burson-Marsteller, between September 2013 and January 2014 to provide an independent assessment of APEC's tools; identify specific communications challenges and strategic opportunities facing incoming host economies; and make recommendations for the APEC Secretariat's strategic communications and public affairs plan for 2014 – 2016.

These include recommendations to:

1. Enhance Communications and Public Affairs Unit's (CPAU) Organizational Structure
2. Leverage APEC Partner Network to Communicate the Benefits of APEC
3. Strengthen Communications Network within Member Economies
4. Enhancing Support for Current and Future Host Economies for 2014-2016
5. Maximizing Media Coverage through Targeted Approach
6. Enhancing Reach of Social Media Channels
7. Enhanced Metrics to Gauge Effectiveness of the APEC Secretariat's Communications Program

Given that social media was not part of the communications landscape when the Communications and Public Affairs Unit was formed twelve years ago, Burson-Marsteller focused much of its study toward managing these areas.

To maximize APEC Secretariat-administered platforms, the APEC Secretariat is exploring how to reposition the APEC Secretariat's social media channels as centers of insight and as a central resource for information by raising awareness and understanding of APEC and its initiatives among a broader audience and communicating APEC achievements and success stories.

But other institutions have been faster to take this up and have dedicated resources to manage their platforms. Burson-Marsteller found that peer organizations such as the ASEAN Secretariat, Asian Development Bank, the World Trade Organization and others typically have teams of staff dedicated to developing content, monitoring and tracking online conversations, managing online stakeholder engagements and planning and overseeing dissemination of content through all digital and social media channels.

Unlike the ASEAN Secretariat, Asian Development Bank, World Trade Organization and others, the APEC Secretariat's current staff allocation does not allow the Secretariat to fully respond to the demands of members which have moved well beyond the original strategy set forth in Ogilvy's Communications Strategy from 2001, which recommended the formation of an integrated communications team.

Recognising the benefits of APEC's networks, the Secretariat will explore in its strategy, the development of both an informal and formal communications network within the member economies. This communications network should bring together previous, current and upcoming host economies to share best-practices. Host economies would also find it useful to have the means and support in communicating to stakeholders outside the host economy during their host year. These networks would include appointed officials from member economies, stakeholders and key influencers focused on domestic engagement that follow an APEC communications roadmap developed by the Secretariat. The intention is for these networks to amplify key messages so that they reverberate around the region.

Taking into account recommendations from Burson-Marsteller, the APEC Secretariat Strategic Communications and Public Affairs Plan for 2014 – 2016 will highlight activities that can be undertaken with current allocated resources. However, given the way communications technologies and stakeholder expectations have evolved since the APEC Secretariat Communications and Public Affairs Unit was formed in 2002, this strategy may propose additional resource and budget to meet the growing demands and requirements from members to engage through traditional communications channels alongside evolving social media systems and partnerships.

Strategic Objectives:

Reflecting the strategic objectives identified in the Secretariat's Strategic Plan, in the course of 2014-2016, the Communications and Public Affairs Unit will:

- Highlight APEC's priorities, concrete benefits, success stories, decisions and real practical outcomes for the region.
- Develop, optimize, expand and maintain APEC's communications tools including innovative communication that improves the efficiency of message delivery.
- Build a communications network to enhance stakeholder engagement.
- Continually monitor, protect, harness and evaluate APEC's brand and reputation.

**Required Action/Decision Points**

SOM to note this summary paper informing of progress in developing the APEC Communications Strategy for 2014 to 2016.



**Asia-Pacific  
Economic Cooperation**

**Developing the APEC Communications Strategy  
2014-2016**

**Executive Summary**

**Submitted February 9, 2014  
By Burson-Marsteller**

## Executive Summary

### Introduction

APEC has come a long way since the Secretariat's Communications and Public Affairs Unit (CPAU) was formed in 2002 and the digital communications revolution that has taken place concurrent with APEC's institutional development has placed increasing demands on a team that for many important stakeholders – the media, academics, member economy communications teams, the general public, and others – is the main point of contact they have with APEC. CPAU has succeeded in meeting APEC's considerable global communications challenges with a structure that is more than ten years old and with a team that is strained as it seeks to engage with stakeholders in both the traditional analogue channels and formats and with the new digital channels that all organizations are now expected to offer and manage.

The recommendations provided in this report are based on the findings that resulted from a research project commissioned by the APEC Secretariat and carried out by Burson-Marsteller and its global network. That study sought to learn just how APEC was meeting its global communications objectives and what steps it should take to support the APEC mission in the years to come. While the priority focus was on 2014 to 2016, the findings and the subsequent recommendations will ensure that CPAU is well-positioned to effectively serve the APEC Secretariat for many years beyond 2016.

In carrying out this research, international public relations and public affairs firm, Burson-Marsteller, used its global network to:

- Assess the overall effectiveness of APEC's communications outputs and tools through a quantitative review of APEC's digital footprint, use of social media, online presence and media coverage, and online pick-up of its outputs such as publications, media activities and events, as well as through a qualitative assessment of APEC's message resonance;
- Identify opportunities for APEC to increase its online presence and enhance its use of online channels through a peer benchmarking exercise to look at the online social footprint and practices of similar organizations including the Asian Development Bank (ADB), the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and the World Trade Organization (WTO);
- Conduct in-depth interviews with 30 of APEC's stakeholders in five host economies – China, Indonesia, Peru, the Philippines and Russia to probe and gauge stakeholders' current awareness levels and perceptions of APEC, to understand which messages, themes and topics in APEC's communications resonated with stakeholders in the various member economies, to identify any gaps and opportunities for APEC communications, and to gauge the effectiveness of its communications function and structure; and
- Conduct desktop and primary research to understand local stakeholder habits and preferences in consumption of information and media, particularly information on APEC and topics related to APEC, and to gauge the effectiveness of key communications tools and outputs currently being used by the APEC Secretariat.

### Key Findings from Assessment of APEC Outputs and Tools and Stakeholder Research

The following is a summary of the key findings that resulted from the quantitative and qualitative assessment of APEC's communications outputs and tools as well as the primary research that was conducted by way of interviews with key stakeholders from a selection of member economies.

These findings support and feed into the communications strategy recommendations that are discussed in this report. Details relating to these findings can be found in the Annex of this document.

#### **Visibility of APEC and Perceived Relevance:**

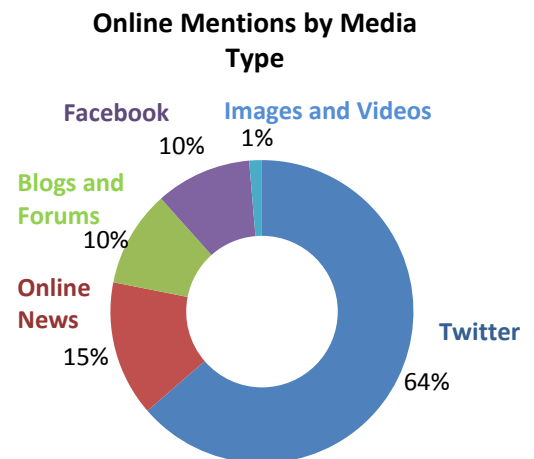
- APEC is **in the news mainly when there is an APEC event taking place**, but stakeholders **hope to see more activity throughout the year**. They would also like to see more commentary by / on APEC in the media on related issues.
- While interviewed stakeholders do not use the media as their main source of information on APEC, they believed that news about **APEC was reported in relevant and effective channels in their member economies**.
- APEC's communications with its current target media has been effective in informing and engaging with a core group of key informed stakeholders in the business community and public sector. However, respondents were of the view that **local media such as general broadsheets need to be targeted more frequently in order to reach the domestic, broader audience**. They also suggested that APEC reaches out to **specialized trade media** so it can go more in-depth on key issues with a more technical audience.

#### **Message Resonance:**

- APEC is **viewed positively among key stakeholders** but the individuals who were interviewed are of the view that **understanding of APEC's relevance diminishes beyond the core group of government and business leaders** who are most directly engaged in its activities and initiatives. In particular, based on their interactions with the broader community and their observations, respondents are of the view that there are low levels of understanding of APEC's objectives, priorities and programs among the wider community such as the general public and smaller businesses.
- Interviewees believe that APEC's perceived value and impact on members is seen to be affected by the fact that it is a **"non-binding" organization and increasing competition from other similar organizations** may take away stakeholders' attention from APEC.
- Stakeholders who are directly involved with APEC see the benefits that it brings to the economy and are able to recall APEC's key messages, for instance in such areas as "economic integration" and "trade facilitation," but for the broader community, **respondents believe the current messages and objectives are too technical and intangible for the "person-on-the-street"**.
- To enhance message resonance, the interviewed stakeholders believe that APEC officials need to **more clearly articulate the concrete and direct benefits that it yields to the broader community** or assist member economy governments or approved third parties to do that. While there are restrictions to the language that the APEC Secretariat can use in its communications efforts, it should also be done in **local languages** and with examples that have the greatest local relevance. This can be done through various means, for instance **official communications to key opinion leaders (KOLs) in English and subsequent dissemination of information via those KOLs in local language**.

### Media Coverage and Online Conversation Analysis:

- There is a healthy level of media coverage and online discussion of APEC across the year (*note: this analysis covered the time period between January – October 2013*). However, **AELW by far accounted for the largest volume of online conversation across the whole year**, with 73,315 mentions that week, representing 42 percent of total mentions from January to October 2013.
- The largest percentage of online mentions of APEC took place on **Twitter (64%)**, however the content of these tweets was largely sourced back to online news sources. This is despite APEC’s relatively modest Twitter following and points to the significant potential impact of Twitter as an effective communications platform for APEC if resources are committed to better leveraging it.
- Top-tier international English language media tended to focus on **macroeconomic and geopolitical issues** when reporting on APEC while **local media were more likely to drill down into industry-specific issues** that resonate with their local economy.
- Tweets from top-tier news sources like The Economist and New York Times earned the most engagement by followers as indicated by shares, but **local sources** such as GMA News, Kompas.com, Tempo.co, Vivanews, Metro TV, **covered APEC more regularly** and received high shares from followers, contributing to greater online share-of-voice.
- The key challenge and opportunity for APEC with regards to media communication is to **further enhance local media interest and understanding of the benefits that APEC brings to local economies** and, at the same time, to **broaden the international media’s interest in APEC beyond the AELW**.

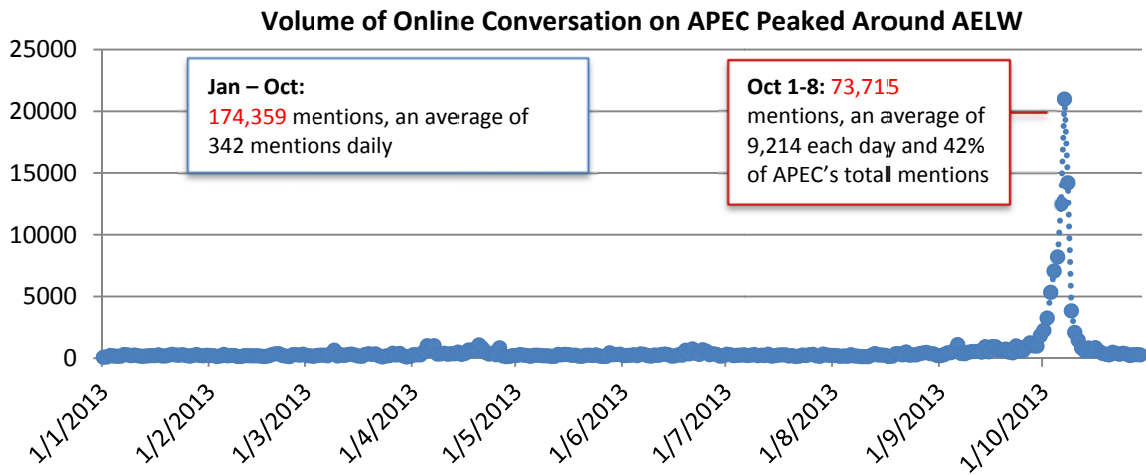


Source: BursonPulse

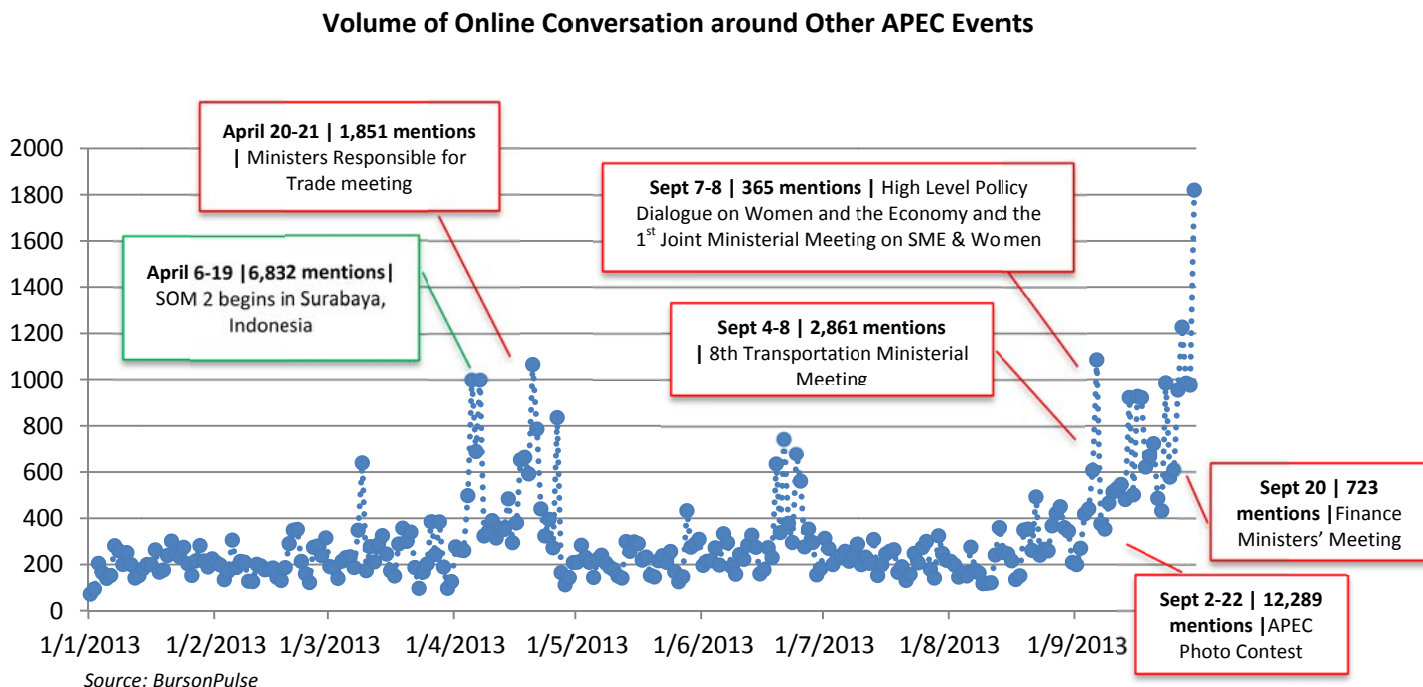
### APEC Digital Footprint:

#### ***APEC Outputs and Tools, Events and Media Activities***

- Topics and themes embodied in APEC Secretariat's **news releases** were by far the most frequently mentioned or picked up throughout the year, and those in the **Outcomes and Outlook brochure** resonated most particularly around AELW. In addition, materials discussing economic issues were generally most widely mentioned or retweeted.
- AELW was by far the largest driver of visitors to the APEC website and the greatest generator of interest, but **SOM 2 and seven other events throughout the year, ranging from a Ministers’ Responsible for Trade meetings to a SME Ministerial Meeting, also drove online news and mentions** and focus of the discussions were directly relevant to topics of the meetings, indicating an interest in other aspects of APEC beyond AELW.
- Interviews, news releases and APEC Bulletin articles about topical subjects such as **‘SMEs’ and ‘Women and Business’** show high resonance with audiences.



Source: BursonPulse



Source: BursonPulse

#### APEC Website Analytics

- Of the top 10 searched keywords, **APEC, APEC card and APEC business travel card** were among the top 3. Other keywords included Summit, members, and Secretariat. There is an **opportunity to enhance the search association between “APEC” and its key priorities and mission.**
- The largest increase in visitors to the site occurred during October around AELW.

#### Social Media Channels

- APEC Secretariat social media channels, having been launched in February 2011, are **generating a growing following** and they have a solid and healthy level of activity. The APEC Secretariat's **Facebook and YouTube pages are especially strong** in terms of number of followers and viewers.
- CPAU would benefit from **additional resources and staffing** to meet the heavy demands of managing digital channels, particularly if it is to move its social media strategy to the next



level, which is to enhance engagement with stakeholders and to broaden its reach.

- While Facebook and YouTube are effective in reaching the broader community, Twitter and LinkedIn are considered to be more **effective channels for reaching key opinion leaders (KOLs)** as they are ideal platforms to grow the organization's position as an incubator of ideas and drive traffic to APEC content, both on the APEC website and APEC publications. They are also seen as a more frequently used tool among thought-leaders to consume and share content and to build a network based on common areas of interest. For these reasons, the **APEC Secretariat could consider focusing and allocating more resources to strengthen its Twitter strategy in addition to Facebook.**
- In general, APEC posts that received the highest engagement were event photos. Also, content is currently largely limited to information, articles and announcements directly related to APEC. This is a reflection that there are **significant opportunities for the APEC Secretariat to further broaden its use of social media and to create opportunities for more two-way dialogue with stakeholders.** But this can only be done with more resources dedicated to managing its social media channels.
- Based on a review of the APEC Secretariat's current followers, it would appear that **APEC is reaching its key audience on Twitter**, however there is room for expanding the Twitter follower base through **greater interaction** to further amplify these messages.

#### Peer Benchmarking:

- It is important to note that due to the differences in scale and structure of the peer organizations in this study as compared to APEC, this benchmarking exercise is intended to help identify best practices that APEC can adopt to enhance its online communications and social media efforts rather than to compare performance. A snapshot of the social media presence of the organizations included in this study is as follows:

#### Social Media Presence of Peer Organizations

Facebook			
Organization	Page Name		Page Likes
ADB	Asian Development Bank		118,776
OECD	OECD		43,150
ASEAN	ASEAN Secretariat		28,420
WTO	World Trade Organization WTO OMC		26,895
APEC	Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC)		7,397

Twitter			
Organization	Handle	Description	Followers
OECD	@OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, global policy forum: Better policies for better lives	119,428
WTO	@wto	The World Trade Organization deals with the global rules of trade between nations. Also follow @WTODGAZEVEDO	27,944
ASEAN	@ASEAN	The official Twitter account of the ASEAN Secretariat - One Vision, One Identity, One Community.	12,909
ADB	@ADB_HQ	The Asian Development Bank's mission is to help developing Asia-Pacific nations reduce poverty and improve their people's quality of life. ADB.	12,189
APEC	@followAPEC	The official APEC Twitter feed. APEC works to support sustainable economic growth and prosperity in the Asia-Pacific region.	2,764
WTO	@wtodgazevedo	Director-General of the World Trade Organization (WTO)	907
APEC	@APECCEOSummit	Asia Pacific's Premier Business Event. For information about the 2013 APEC CEO Summit, see @APEC_CEOsummit	536

Source: Various Social Media Platforms

- APEC has the **highest rate of “engagement per follower”** on Facebook when comparing its engagement level during AELW with other major events hosted by its peers.
- **Size, volume and frequency** do matter - volume of followers, frequency of posts and content of posts are key to determining the success of a social media program, and this is in part determined also by the resources dedicated to managing social media channels
- **Twitter was the most popular platform** for all of the peer organizations and frequency of use was very high, contributing to a high share-of-voice.
- Peers have a **consistent digital or social media engagement strategy**, aimed at generating sustained engagement.

#### **Communications Function and Structure:**

- While interviewed stakeholders were generally satisfied with current communications with the APEC Secretariat – both in terms of the channels available and quality of engagement, they believed it would be **beneficial to have both an informal and formal communications network within the member economies** with CPAU as the overall driver and coordinator. In particular, this communications network should bring together previous, current and upcoming host economies to share best-practices. Host economies would also **find it useful to have the means and support in communicating to stakeholders outside the host economy during their host year.**
- Having said that, some respondents also pointed out the **limited capacity of the APEC Secretariat** in terms of staffing and resources.
- Respondents believe that the APEC Secretariat should focus on overall communications among working groups across the member economies, while member economies should be responsible for communications and engagement with local audiences. However, they also believe that the **APEC Secretariat should also collaborate more closely with local governments as well as academia to enhance understanding of APEC among the broader community**, which is important if it is to achieve its objectives. They believe that while APEC has largely engaged with an elite group in the past, there is a need to enhance understanding and awareness among the broader segment of society who are at times the direct beneficiaries of its programs.

#### **Summary of Communications Strategy Recommendations**

The strategic recommendations provided below are designed to enhance the effectiveness of APEC’s communications with key stakeholder audiences and, in doing that, also strengthen APEC’s overall effectiveness and relevance with those and other groups. These recommendations are provided in greater detail in the full report.

<b>Strategic Recommendation #1: Enhance CPAU Organizational Structure</b>
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It is very clear that CPAU does not currently have the staffing resources needed for a more robust communications program that takes into consideration the communications landscape today, including the social media environment, and the current and future needs of APEC’s stakeholders, as well as to generate communications outputs similar to that of peer organizations such as the Asian Development Bank and World Trade Organization. Resource constraints limit what the APEC Secretariat is able to achieve from a communications perspective and as such a key and fundamental recommendation is to augment CPAU resources so that appropriate resources are in place to support the initiatives that are proposed in the following sections.

To this end, we believe that CPAU should consider an enhanced team structure with additional staffing resources. The additional staff could come on board in phases based on areas that require more immediate enhancements and others that may be more mid-term goals. The first phase would see an expansion in the roles of the Program Directors and greater levels of interaction with the Working Groups, the addition of an APEC Fellow from member economies; the second phase would see the addition of a Partner Communications Coordinator, a Social Media Manager. In the longer term, a Host Economy Communications Liaison position would also be created to support host economies in their media activities and other programs. Please refer to the full report for more information on these additional recommended positions.

**Strategic Recommendation #2: Leverage APEC Partner Network to Communicate the Benefits of APEC**

To address this perceived challenge that APEC communications is currently not reaching a wide cross-section of the community and that there is a low understanding of the benefits that APEC brings to those communities, we would recommend that APEC place a high priority on the **establishment of a network of both formal and informal communications partners throughout the APEC economies** who can take APEC messages and content, adapt them for their local stakeholders (media, businesses, academics, commentators, and the general public), and then communicate that information in the local language and with local context and relevance through local contact points.

Communications partners would carry out this role as a public service. This is consistent with point 3.1 of the APEC Secretariat's Strategic Plan for 2014-2016, that calls on the Secretariat to "highlight APEC's priorities, concrete benefits, success stories, decisions and real practical outcomes for the region." Such communications partners would include **institutions and even local commentators who are seen as credible by target audiences in their host economy and acceptable by the host economy government**. This communications partner network is not meant to be the exclusive stakeholder group for APEC communications, it will still have to address its reporting obligations and the information needs of international media outlets, but the overall effectiveness of its communications and its ability to communicate success stories will be increased significantly.

**Strategic Recommendation #3: Strengthen Communications Network within Member Economies**

In addition to the network of communications partners, we would also **recommend that CPAU formalizes the communications network comprising host economies to more effectively engage with and support hosts in their communications efforts**. We understand that CPAU has already set up a network of host economies comprising previous and upcoming hosts, and suggest that this be formalized with host economies appointing representatives to participate in the network. These representatives would complement and supplement existing "infrastructure" and resources such as the Program Directors from the host economies, since the host economies communications network would focus on media and communications, an area that may not be a priority for the Program Directors currently.

This is an approach to better **harness its "internal" stakeholders within APEC member economies in supporting the communications of the achievements that are benefitting their constituents**. This is a political reality, these governments, particularly during and leading up to their host year, need the APEC Secretariat's help in supporting the rationale for the investments of public funds they are making to support their participation in APEC. Their ability to communicate APEC achievements and success stories needs to be supported by CPAU and its network of communications partners. The following are recommendations on formalizing the network:

#### **Strategic Recommendation #4: Enhancing Support for Current and Future Host Economies for 2014-2016**

Based on the findings from the interviews with key officials and opinion leaders in the economies that have recently been host economies and those that are scheduled to be host economies over the next three years, there is **an opportunity for the CPAU to enhance its support to upcoming host economies.**

- **China:** It would appear that the APEC China team has its program well in hand for this year and that the most important role that the **CPAU team can play at this point is providing continued advisory and managing the international communications of the APEC news and developments coming out of China** during this important host year. This could include a focus on promoting international developments and news related to the three priorities selected for this host year. That focus could include arranging opportunities for China's spokespeople to discuss these issues and their priorities for developments in these areas during their host year with international media and as part of APEC events or speaking platforms organized by the APEC network of communications partners in selected APEC economies. It could also include support for the distribution of relevant APEC-related communications coming out of China's host year through CPAU communications channels.
- **The Philippines and Peru:** Interview respondents from both the Philippines and Peru both expressed a desire and a willingness to have the APEC Secretariat support their efforts as they plan for their host years. That included a **request for very clear guidelines on the actions they should be taking to plan and implement the communications surrounding their host year.** We understand that the CPAU team has already participated in training sessions for some APEC organizing staff in some economies. We recommend that these be formalized and turned into a series of programs that could be carried out in both the Philippines and Peru as these economies prepare for their host year. These programs could include such things as **spokesperson training, international media handling and engagement, social media tools and techniques, issues and crisis management, and communicating APEC issues to the business community.** We also recommend that CPAU organize visits of delegations of the communications teams from both the Philippines and Peru to China at various times during 2014 to organize meetings between Chinese APEC communications officials and their counterparts from the Philippines and Peru.

#### **Strategic Recommendation #5: Maximizing Media Coverage through Targeted Approach**

As reflected in the assessment of online media and conversation regarding APEC, the CPAU has been effective in generating discussion and interest in the APEC's initiatives. However, the CPAU's efforts to maximize media coverage of APEC and its activities and achievements can be further enhanced by focusing on content rather than channels to enhance message resonance and relevance, which would in turn maximize media opportunities. The following are topline suggestions to enhance the APEC's media strategy:

- **Expand Media Engagements of APEC Spokespeople:** There is an opportunity for APEC officials to provide commentary on APEC events, including, and in addition to, the AELW, in order to ensure the relevance of those events for their target audiences. The focus would be on commenting on these developments at the same time in a range of economies to ensure that stakeholders in those economies understand the context and the relevance to their economy. This would also serve to "humanize" APEC and put a "face" on it which will enable APEC officials to personally tell the APEC story without third-party filters and support greater APEC relevance. Greater emphasis should also be placed on communicating the outcomes of

APEC meetings and initiatives and how APEC builds on achievements from each host year to demonstrate tangible outcomes and impact, and reinforce APEC's relevance.

- **Increase Media Coverage Focusing on APEC in Addition to Coverage Generated by Leaders' Week:** The research showed that APEC's visibility and media coverage is predominantly event-driven, of which the APEC Leaders' Week enjoys the highest profile. In addition to supporting events with interview opportunities and in order to enhance APEC's profile and visibility among stakeholders more consistently and regularly, we recommend that CPAU develop an editorial calendar with key themes, topics and media engagement activities identified for each calendar month, and implement this to drive coverage in the media.
- **Forge Closer Ties with APEC Working Groups:** The research clearly shows that the APEC Working Groups are carrying out very newsworthy activities, perhaps even some of the most newsworthy outside the annual Leaders' Meeting. We recommend that consideration be given to appointing a member of the CPAU team in a support role to help them communicate the achievements or the recommendations that are coming out of their work. We also recommend that the CPAU place a priority on a small number of Working Groups dealing with topics that are of greatest interest to the general business or trade and industry media in APEC member economies and internationally as this would directly enhance resonance with the audience.
- **Identify Salient Topics for Development of Opinion Articles:** We also suggest an increased focus on controlled communications, such as opinion editorials commenting on issues of the day, be considered with articles drafted to be localized and placed in leading business publications in a number of economies. Again, APEC communications partners must play a role in supporting this process through translation and placement of such articles where appropriate.
- **Focus on Regional and Global Tier-One Media:** We recommend that, in addition to the trade and industry media program, that CPAU continues to direct its media relations efforts on regional or global tier-one business and economic policy publications as these have the greatest reach and influence among opinion leaders and have the highest "multiplier effect" in terms of reaching other stakeholders such as local media outlets. Industry and trade media should also be targeted specifically for more technical news items as they will have a high likelihood of picking it up, thereby generating additional coverage of the development.
- **Support Member Economies on Local Media Engagement:** While we suggest that CPAU focuses on the two groups of media above, CPAU should also continue to support member economy governments and communications partners in their media relations activities with local media outlets – for instance, by sharing media content such as news releases and the monthly APEC Media Highlights and their regular engagements with CPAU.
- **Develop Media Highlights Tool:** Develop an "APEC Media Highlights" tool that is sent to selected media outlets each month throughout the APEC region and APEC member economy communication partners in the APEC economies. These media "teasers" save CPAU from having to develop and distribute a number of stories that have no relevance or interest for specific media. They also highlight for the media the items or developments within APEC that they need to know in any given month, providing sufficient lead time to media so that they can plan APEC-related stories in advance.
- **Develop Targeted News Stories:** CPAU should consider writing their news releases based on target audiences, some may be the wider public while others may be targeted industry groups. This means that a focus on a specific industry would include a technical analysis by a representative of the relevant APEC Working Group and it would be directed solely at publications and online news outlets in that industry sector. That news would not be distributed to a wide general audience.
- **Develop Targeted Media Database:** This approach would require CPAU to maintain media databases by industry and topics. Applying this revised approach to media relations,

information that is relatively technical should also be reserved for trade and industry publications. A focus on trade and industry publications will generate expanded media coverage due to the clear relevance it has for the target audience. Specific information about the journalist's areas of interest should be included so that they could be approached for specific stories.

- **Continue Tier-one Speaking Opportunities and Related Interviews:** We see significant value on continuing to identify tier-one speaking opportunities for the Executive Director and members of the senior APEC team because that supports the focus on tier-one business and economic policy publications if those speaking engagements are also leveraged to the media by both ensuring that media is in attendance at the speaking platform or by disseminating a summary of the key points of those speeches immediately after they are given.
- **Addressing Language Constraints:** The fact that CPAU can only communicate in English clearly limits the ability of the media in many APEC member economies to use APEC news releases and other materials. We believe that this challenge can be partly addressed if CPAU works with its network of communication partners in the member economies to get their support in translating and localizing that information and subsequently distributing it to media in their economy or articulating APEC's messages in media interviews and other communications.

#### **Strategic Recommendation #6: Enhancing Reach of Social Media Channels**

A key challenge identified through the assessment of the effectiveness of the APEC Secretariat's outputs and tools was that while its social media channels are steadily gaining a strong following and current activity across those channels are solid and healthy, more could be done to enhance the usage of these platforms. In particular, Twitter and LinkedIn are two of the most important channels for message dissemination given the way information travels and is shared on these channels by users. There is also an opportunity to broaden the use of YouTube and maintain a healthy level of content and activity on Facebook in order to reach the broader community. We would strongly recommend assigning dedicated resources and staff, for instance by recruiting a social media specialist, to ensure APEC's social media channels are managed effectively. We also recommend that the APEC focus on the following strategies to enhance the effectiveness of its social media strategy:

- Repositioning APEC Secretariat's social media channels as centers of insight and as a central resource for information on APEC and relevant issues
- Taking better advantage of social media channels as a platform for engaging with APEC and a channel for two-way dialogue if resourced appropriately

Tactics based on the strategy above are provided for a range of social media channels in the full report.

#### **Strategic Recommendation #7: Enhanced Metrics to Gauge Effectiveness of the APEC Secretariat's Communications Program**

We have incorporated a range of measurement tools as part of this initiative to determine the effectiveness of the APEC's communications program. They have included direct contact through interviews with internal and external stakeholders, assessments of quantity and tone of media coverage, and a detailed analysis of social media and other online coverage of APEC and its issues. In some cases, the results have been benchmarked against peer organizations. A more systematic approach of tracking and evaluating the effectiveness of the APEC communications strategy and initiatives would enable the APEC Secretariat to track progress of and refine the program on an ongoing basis and over time. Some of these recommended metrics and measurements such as

tracking media coverage generated by CPAU's efforts (e.g. interviews set up by the team with spokespersons) can be implemented with existing resources and with the support of the additional interns suggested. Others such as measuring APEC's online and social media engagement beyond the basic analytics that each social media platform provides would require the time commitment and expertise of the proposed Social Media Manager.

###