

# AUTOMOTIVE COUNCIL

## Communications Strategy Proposal

*13 July 2010*

# COMMUNICATIONS MISSION

The objective of the Automotive Council communications activity is:

*To spread awareness of the partnership between the UK government and the automotive industry, working together to take advantage of the sector's strengths and the opportunities open to it, making the UK motor industry an increasingly attractive proposition in which to invest or pursue a career in.*

# KEY PARTNERS

**The key partners in this communications activity will be:**

- Department of Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS)
- Manufacturing Insight (MI)
- Office of Low Emission Vehicles (OLEV)
- Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT)
- Technology Strategy Board (TSB)
- UK Trade and Investment (UKTI)
- Companies represented on the Automotive, Technology and Supply Chain Groups

# TERMS OF REFERENCE

- The Automotive Council communications activity **will not**:
  - Provide a response to, or running commentary on, government policy or industry issues.
  - Seek to provide a collective voice on government policy or industry issues that may undermine or counter the position of established partners.
  - Actively seek a running media agenda that may overshadow the strategic work of the Councils.
  - Duplicate or overlap with existing partner or stakeholder activity.

# TERMS OF REFERENCE

- The Automotive Council communications activity will:
  - Clearly communicate the objectives, strategic framework and the work streams of the Automotive, Technology and Supply Chain Groups.
  - Provide a targeted communications channel and strategy to maintain a ‘drumbeat’ of positive industry news.
  - Seek opportunities to work collaboratively with, and within the framework of, existing programmes and in conjunction with key partners adding value to their activities.
  - Work with key partners to utilise existing event opportunities and develop specific activities to spread the Automotive Council message.
  - Develop an Automotive Council website, hosted by SMMT, as a central source of information on Automotive Council and stakeholder activity.

# MAIN AUDIENCES

Working with existing organisations to spread our message to the widest possible audience will be key to success.

Audience	Mechanism
Media (National, Consumer, Trade and Regional – print and digital)	Industry with SMMT and BIS
Media (International – print and digital)	Industry
Decision makers in OEMs and Suppliers	Industry with UKTI
Financial and Banking	Industry
Students, Teachers and Academia	Industry with Manufacturing Insight
General public	All

The role of this communications function is to add an automotive perspective to existing activity or provide an over-arching message of support, not to duplicate the work of related organisations.

# KEY MESSAGES

**Messages will be refined at each delivery point to engage the target audience. A list of proof-points will be developed for each message.**

- The UK automotive sector has a range of strengths that make it an appealing investment opportunity for the global industry and an exciting and rewarding career choice.
- The UK has a dynamic and coherent approach to maximising the value of the transition to a low carbon economy with a specific focus on R&D, high tech and supply chain development.
- A shift in national government focus and a re-balancing of the economy is providing for a greater emphasis on automotive manufacturing and a more collaborative approach between government and industry in the UK.

**There will then be sub-messages for each initiative and work group.**

# TANGIBLE ASSETS

- The Automotive Council communications activity will deliver:
  - A top line set of key message ‘soundbites’ for Council members.
  - A detailed briefing document and Q&A for the use of Council members and partners, including facts and figures to support messages.
  - A brand identity that reflects the values and activities of the Automotive Council.
  - A basic Automotive Council website creating a single point of reference for organisations or individuals seeking more information about investment or careers opportunities in the motor industry.
  - A regular e-newsletter to be distributed to industry, stakeholders, partner contacts etc providing a regular update on Automotive Council and stakeholder activities.
  - A timetable of communications activity based around adding value to partner events and activities that may present an opportunity to deliver Automotive Council messages.



# BRAND IDENTITY

- The creative process is ongoing. Designs will be presented to the Automotive Council Informal Working Group for initial approval.
- The Automotive Council brand identity will reflect:
  - Collaboration.
  - Environmental awareness.
  - Wide industry representation.
  - A progressive and dynamic industry.
  - Appeal to a broad consumer audience.
- On completion of the Automotive Council brand identity, a 'brand bible' will be created which will determine the look and feel of the website and e-newsletter.

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- Creative design, look and feel to be determined by the brand guidelines set through the development of the brand identity.
- Content will aim to deliver the Automotive Council messages directly to a variety of audiences from industry and financiers to students and consumers. It will include:
  - A dynamic and engaging homepage reflecting the modern appeal of the sector.
  - A detailed introduction to the Automotive Council, its workstreams and objectives.
  - Public sections for news, case studies, facts and figures, careers information, events calendar and individual areas to detail the activities and achievements of the two Supply Chain and Technology Groups.
  - A secure members area for Council agendas, minutes and working documents.
  - An easy registration process to sign-up to the e-newsletter allowing for future targeted deliveries.

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- Detailed information about the work of the Council and the scope of the UK motor industry will be delivered through sections targeted at:
  - Design, research and development.
  - Manufacturing.
  - Technology.
  - Supply Chain.
  - Skills and training.
  - Careers.
  - Funding and incentives.
  - Facts and figures.
- Wherever possible, pictorial interactive design features will be used to make the information more accessible and user-friendly.
- A phased development plan which initially targets the industry but then grows with content to appeal to other target groups such as students.
- Initial target audience – industry and business community however messages are to be kept neutral to encompass all audiences.



# E-NEWSLETTER

- A monthly e-newsletter designed to create a 'drumbeat' of positive industry news:
  - Newsletter will seek to group together and reiterate announcements made by partner organisations and Automotive Council members, not generate its own stories and content.
  - Distribution across all audiences through a database to be initiated by partner input and developed through registration on the Automotive Council website to support the delivery of the key communications messages.
  - Short summary articles and headings with links to the Automotive Council website to draw visitors back to the site.
  - Content provided by partners and Automotive Council members to be edited for consistent tone of voice.

# COORDINATED ACTIVITY PLAN

- The following events and activities create opportunities to promote the work of the Automotive Council:
  - SMMT International Automotive Summit (30 June 2010)
  - Announcing the new government’s ongoing support for the Council (1 July 2010)
  - Launch of the new ‘baby’ Land Rover (1 July 2010)
  - SMMT Parliamentary Reception (20 July 2010)
  - Automotive Council follow up to the TSB Capability Study (late July 2010)
  - CENEX Low Carbon Vehicle Event (15 – 16 September 2010)
  - Paris International Motor Show (Press days 30 September – 1 October 2010)
- Please note, these events provide an opportunity to weave Automotive Council messaging into those of the event organiser. The extent to which Automotive Council messaging is included will be at the discretion of the organiser.

# BUDGET AND RESOURCING

- SMMT has committed to financially supporting a three month start-up phase (mid – April to mid-July 2010) and ongoing basic maintenance to include:
  - Website maintenance (regular updates to news stories, case studies and basic information).
  - Website development within the boundaries of the set-up budget and content development.
  - Delivery of a regular e-newsletter to create a ‘drumbeat’ of positive automotive activity.
  - Maintenance of the key messages and Q&A document.
  - Coordination of partner activities and events, supporting a consistent delivery of Automotive Council messages.

# BUDGET AND RESOURCING

- Additional budget and resource would be required to develop other elements of the Communications activity including:
  - 1) To implement development phases of the website:
    - Develop specific content to appeal to other key audiences, eg student and finance community.
    - Development of the Automotive Council website to incorporate more detailed aspects of the working groups' activities.
    - Invest in overall content with more regular updates and delivery of the Automotive Council e-newsletter.
  - 2) Proactive media outreach and events to generate broader coverage and understanding. eg feature articles, forums, roundtable media discussions, launch events and embassy/ambassadorial visits.
  - 3) Increased web functionality to include forums, on-line market place and tailored events for specific audiences eg Students.

NB Communications Working Group recommends 1) + 2) as minimum level of activity.



# NEXT STEPS

- On approval by the Automotive Council, and subsequent approval from the Automotive Council itself:
  - Completion, approval and circulation of key messages and Q&A document.
  - Approval and roll out of the Automotive Council brand identity.
  - Coordination of the e-newsletter distribution database (first copy to be distributed alongside launch of the website).
  - Launch of the Automotive Council website (late July 2010).
- The Automotive Council Informal Working Group has agreed to continue resourcing the Communications function for a further three month period (to mid-October 2010) to assess the value gained by the Council and its members.