

Strategic Marketing Assessment for Cyprus Community Media Centre (CCMC)

Report

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1.a. Key products and services

Cyprus Community Media Centre (CCMC) offers the following products and services:

□ **Training (General theme, for broad audiences).**

CCMC offers a variety of training subjects aiming to increase the media skills of its members and clients. It offers training on basic /elementary media skills, such as Writing Press releases, Invitation design, How to Blog, Using Social Media. And also more advanced training subjects, such as Video production, Image Processing, Audio Production, Podcasting, Strategic communications training, Media crisis, Handling with Mass Media exposure, Guerilla Marketing.

It also offers training on Website Construction (currently at a basic level), and more advanced web subjects like training for online live streaming of audio and video, comprehensive training on services like YouTube.

□ **Training (Individual/Custom-made, Specialized Trainings).**

Unlike broad audience trainings, these are custom-made trainings to companies and NGOs that they include assessment of specific needs and design of a custom made course for them. So far, nobody else in Cyprus offers this kind of custom-made training on the range of subjects that CCMC covers.

□ **Leasing of “Community Space”.**

“Community Space” is a multifunction area which CCMC offers to its members and clients for various purposes. For members it’s free and for non-members there is a fee. The area enjoys very popular usage and it is also provided to the mass media (taking advantage of the UN administered neutral area – the Green Line). CCMC uses “Community Space” as a marketing tool for promoting themselves because it’s very

attractive – more people are becoming aware of CCMC due to attending to this area.

□ **Lease of Media Equipment.**

Such as cameras, recording devices, content production tools and other auxiliary equipment.

□ **Consulting.**

CCMC offers its expertise on subjects: Consulting on corporate and media responsibility, for example EU norms (Directives not adhered much in Cyprus by the mass media but obliged as Cyprus being an EU member state e.g. providing air time for public service announcements), Green line regime regulations, Consulting for contacts needed for an NGO (Non-Governmental Organization) to perform a task, Consulting for NGOs by assessment of specific needs (e.g. defining the audience for a specific task, technology and technological skills assessment), Issues on multilinguality and translations. Within the Consulting and the execution of tasks, CCMC offers dedicated support to the clients.

□ **Creation and Broadcasting of Audiovisual media.**

Video production includes video concept design, shooting, editing, production. The videos are then broadcasted on the internet, at events, by television stations.

Audio production includes concept design, recording, editing and productions. Audio productions, similarly with videos, are broadcasted on the internet (e.g. in the form of podcasts, streaming, download), at events, or for radio stations.

□ **Photo shootings and Photo and Printed material productions.**

A photo shooting can be for an event, or for the purposes of producing printed material (e.g. a poster, an invitation, or other publication), for a website. For these tasks CCMC offers the necessary equipment,

allocation of skilled staff, design and photo/image processing and graphics.

□ **Advertisement Concept Design and Production.**

This is a service to be offered soon by CCMC and it is currently on planning phase. Advertisement production is a service CCMC can offer since they already have the expertise, skilled staff and experience on video concept design and production.

CCMC plans to provide “whole packages” i.e. not just the advertisement production, but also the consulting, defining target audience, work on the concept and then executing the actual advertisement production.

□ **Production of VNRs (Video News Reports)**

CCMC has established cooperation with UN agencies in order to produce and distribute news very quickly in the form of VNRs, regarding the activities on UN agencies in Cyprus and on matters that are related to them.

□ **Execution of EU-funded Programmes with cooperation with other organizations.**

This includes tasks like proposal writing, establishing partnerships with other organizations for the execution of EU-funded programmes. For example, CCMC would be the partner organization that will offer the media production in a project. CCMC executes the “Visibility and Communication Plan” that is required by such projects. CCMC approaches their members and consults them to team up for a project application where CCMC will be the partner for the Communications part of the project.

1.b. Major competitors

CCMC is currently a funded, Not-for-profit company with a social cause. But it does have competitors, which some of them CCMC aims to approach them on a different, more cooperative level; others on a more direct-approach competition. Soon CCMC will not be funded anymore and therefore will have to be self-sustainable, but still keep its Non-for-profit status and community-oriented mission.

We have identified and profiled the following major competitors of CCMC and the levels which upon CCMC competes with them:

□ **“Traditional” profit-oriented local Mass Media.**

These are local television and radio stations. CCMC can't compete on a main level with those companies as it does not yet have broadcasting capabilities. They couldn't compete with them head-on, because firstly CCMC has a different mission (community oriented), a different nature (as currently a funded Not-For-profit company, and in the near future as a non-funded, not-for-profit but self-sustainable company) and it is oriented towards harnessing alternative media (like internet, online video services, blogs, social networks etc). Therefore, not only they couldn't compete head-on with the established mass media, but even if they'd try doing so, they would surely fail.

That's why CCMC does not see those companies from their complete angle, so CCMC aims to cooperate with them at a level by e.g. providing them with CCMC-produced content, either video productions on the social / Civil Society spectrum that CCMC covers, or commercial productions like CCMC-produced advertisements.

Further on researching on the cooperation with local mass media companies, CCMC currently runs a project of “Collaborative Media

Initiative” and by this CCMC aims to facilitate an improvement in relationships through dialogue, and increase opportunities for media stakeholders in the two communities to collaborate in order to identify how future collaboration might best be achieved under CCMC’s umbrella. CCMC will create a collaborative media platform in Cyprus in order to engage extensively with local stakeholders and key actors.

On the market targeting perspective, CCMC aims at a niche market by offering an alternative view from their competitors into some of the issues, i.e. the society perspective vs. the government perspective, the civil society perspective vs. the political / political parties’ perspective.

Theme-wise, CCMC aims to take on “long” and difficult issues that are not very appealing to their competitors (e.g. AIDS, LGBT issues, the issue of the new history school textbooks etc) and convey them as simple messages in order to provide that perspective to the people. On this however, here we see an element of competition by CCMC competing with those companies on the angle of information, i.e. CCMC will aim to “sell” a different opinion than their competitors and these opinions will be clashing among them. This is because their competitors as profit-oriented companies present certain issues from a “bad news” perspective, due to the fact “bad news” sell better to the audience. Whereas CCMC tries to convey a more open-minded, reconciliative message on those difficult issues.

- **Other companies that offer Audio/Visual Services and Training.** On the level of training, CCMC aims to collaborate in various ways with other companies that offer AV training services. A way is to bring in trainers from other companies and hire them to deliver CCMC trainings.

Also, due to the fact CCMC possesses advanced AV equipment, it leases this equipment to their competitors in combination with the

“Community space” that is very comfortable to host training sessions.

The elements that give CCMC a competitive edge on providing A/V training are: CCMC can offer more expertise on certain Audio/Visual subjects and this makes CCMC’s training more attractive, in combination with CCMC’s deeper experience in working with teams, working with youth and bicultural groups. CCMC offers training services at a low price, offers more hands-on experience and more personal handling on training and therefore delivers training more quickly with faster results, has a hold on niche market of charities and NGOs by offering low prices.

On this, CCMC aims to emphasize its role as a “Community Media Centre” and therefore it aims to be an organization where Content producing companies come to cooperate. So, especially this period where CCMC is funded, it avoids to prioritize competing with those companies as much as possible. In the future though, where CCMC will not be funded and will be self-sustainable (but still not-for-profit), the competition approach will of course escalate, but on the other hand CCMC will still adhere to its principles as a “Community Media Centre”. Therefore CCMC will try not to get involved in a head-to-head competition, but will try to cooperate on as many levels as possible.

□ **Independent production houses**

These are companies that offer productions for advertisements and other video productions. As CCMC will soon enter into this sphere of activities, it will compete with local companies like CrowHouse and the Sigma production company (not with Sigma as channel).

In order to compete, CCMC plans to provide “whole packages” i.e. not just the advertisement production, but also the consulting, defining target audience, work on the concept and then the advertisement production.

□ **Other Training Companies – CIIM.**

The Cyprus International Institute of Management (CIIM) is a non-profit post-graduate educational institution offering degree programs and executive courses.

CCMC has been designing, delivering and improving on training courses that have been identified that will compete with CIIM on the level of “Executive Education” that CIIM offers.

The themes of some of the courses CIIM and CCMC offer are similar (e.g. the themes of Communication Skills, Interpersonal Skills, Strategic Communications, Leadership, Ethics and Corporate Social Responsibility, Marketing / Guerilla Marketing, Presentation Skills, Project Management and others).

Also, CCMC and CIIM have a similar approach in consulting with client organizations in order to design executive, custom-made training specifically for the clients’ needs.

Although some of the courses are similar, CCMC differentiates by offering training into the contexts of UN neutrality, bicommunal, NGOs/Civil Society groups. Also, CIIM hires trainers with Phd degree for such trainings and they charge expensive; whereas CCMC hires trainers with Msc degree and offers lower prices.

1.c. Members and Customers

CCMC's clients can be defined in two categories: a) CCMC's member organizations that CCMC primarily offers its services to them and b) clients that are not-members, which can be individuals or organizations.

CCMC currently has around 30 organisations as its members and expanding. Those organizations are legally registered and represent a broad range of civil society organisations throughout Cyprus. They are organizations that work on issues like health, the environment, human rights, women's rights, youth, reconciliation, education, culture, charities etc.

CCMC also offers services to non-members, that consist of companies and individuals that work on video and audio production, advertisement, training providers, media (TV / Radio / Printed media).

CCMC's major customers are:

- The Cyprus Film Archives
- The Management Centre of the Mediterranean
- European Network Against Racism (ENAR)
- Future Worlds Centre
- NGO Support Centre
- The Association of Historical Dialogue and Research (AHDR)
- POST Research Institute (POST RI)
- ADD-ADHD Support
- The Biologists Association
- The Cyprus Academic Forum (CAF)
- The Cyprus EU Association
- Eastern Mediterranean Artists Association (EMAA)
- Green Action Group
- Hands Across the Divide Women's Association
- The Sociopolitical Studies Institute (IKME)
- KISA Action for Equality, Support, Antiracism

2. Success of CCMC

CCMC members/clients have highly responded to CCMC as there is an overwhelming need for its services.

CCMC has been working with these organizations for two years before CCMC received its first funding about one and a half year ago. Currently CCMC is in its second year of operation, but in the fourth year of presence

CCMC is “about to become successful”. For the first year and a half (after the funding started) CCMC has been researching, forming and developing their products and capacity. The Trainings as products have been proved their way forward to achieve customer satisfaction and usefulness.

Trainings have been assessed and designed based on customers’ needs; each session was evaluated with the help of customers, conducting systematic consultations for customer feedback and suggestions (effectively achieving involvement of members / customers in the process) for continuing improvement of the trainings which have now been optimized.

Success Criteria have been formulated in consultations with the original 20 members, in the two preparatory years of assessment. These criteria have been submitted to the donor (the United Nations Development Programme – UNDP) and have been authorized regarding the target groups, goals and objectives. In this way, CCMC’s management have effectively marketed themselves to the current (and the future) donor. CCMC The attractiveness of CCMC to the UNDP as a donor is defined by the fact that it fits the donor’s main mission, the mandate of the UNDP in Cyprus: “to foster bicomunal interactions (training, workshops, youth camps, business cooperation)”.

Certain success criteria were set as the key success factors:

1. A Criterion set was to produce 120 productions by the end of the current funding period. So far CCMC produced 40, so technically they

are on track (i.e. they can finish 120 before the end of the period). CCMC conducts a monthly evaluation on the process of production development.

2. A goal was set to train 300 persons in Media Skills. So far CCMC got 200 persons trained; they have 9 months until the end of the funding, so they are on track.
3. A goal was set to achieve 5000 website hits quarterly, and on the first two days of the website launching they had 140,000. So far they had exceeded their quarterly expectations by 50,000 hits.
4. CCMC set a goal to increase its memberships and they have increased from the original 20 member organizations to 30.
5. CCMC set a goal to increase the occurrences of reconciliation issues discussed in the mainstream media; so far they have produced eight published columns, five radio shows and currently two shows are produced for Sigma and CyBC.

Setting milestones and metrics of success is vital for CCMC, as in the near future they will function without funding from the main donor and therefore they will have to ensure sustainability, competitiveness and growth. Their quality of trainings, productions and levels of professionalism have been assessed as meeting to the demanding standards and therefore we can conclude that CCMC is “ready to become successful”.

3. Pricing Strategy

Each service and product of CCMC is priced with this method: Since the CCMC is a not-for-profit company, they get funded by the donors for products and services they provide. However, even though they offer services for free, the services have to match the capital (money) offered from the donors. The donors of CCMC fund the services and products by defining each set as “projects”, according to their expectancy that every set of a project’s goals and objectives will be met. Then, CCMC has to prepare a detailed budget for every single item (that amongst others include constant needs such as costs of trainers, materials, catering etc), and by taking these costs into consideration they add an internal value, depending on the product’s or service’s significance.

For example, the “Media Crisis Management” course is evaluated as a high-impact course with high significance: This course is more relevant to the needs; it is precious in matters of survival of an organization (surviving with a media crisis, or a crisis in the institutional / economical level) that will help those organizations to become more professional to their public image, to get known, and pass their message out. Therefore, CCMC emphasizes and ensures that the attached value of this specific course is greater than e.g. the “Invitation Design” training course, which is not defined as much as significant.

So although CCMC’s members don’t pay for the products and services, in effect the members are donated the means to have those services by the CCMC’s donor. The abovementioned attached value that CCMC defines, is used by CCMC for its costs and for its fund reserves.

Moreover, CCMC also base their attached value / pricing strategy on the different levels of partnerships and clients they have, e.g. with small organizations that they cooperate with, that have different needs than big organizations they cooperate with e.g. CYTA.

As for the trainings pricing, CCMC has the ability to charge at low prices and one of the reasons is because they have low staff costs. Here is why: CCMC is a not-for-profit company which, in brief, means that accounting-wise the organization is run with a zero-balance. As a non-for-profit organization CCMC is allowed to have volunteers working for them – which CCMC attracts by inspiring and getting support from the community level. “Ironically” (considering their current funded, non-for-profit status), this makes CCMC’s pricing for training very competitive as they have volunteer trainers with media background that teach, without having the yearning of getting paid. And thus this makes prices for trainings low.

They also examine their competitors and regarding the service of individualized custom-made trainings that cover specific client’s needs, CCMC investigates and assess how much their competitors (e.g. CIIM) pay for their trainers. If for example their competitors have Phd-degree trainers and they charge expensive, CCMC plans to hire Msc-degree trainers and offer lower prices but still with high levels of service quality.

So, in the near future where CCMC will not be funded by the current donor, CCMC designs its pricing strategy based on the evaluation, optimization and the successfulness of CCMC’s trainings from the last one and a half year of operation. Scope of CCMC is the growth through their member organizations, in order to get more funded projects by cooperating with those members and also by attaching to Cyprus and European media.

To their advantage, the most expensive premises and equipment have already been acquired through funding (audio visual equipment, premises, computers, cameras, very expensive software etc), so CCMC will not have to make now any major investments for the future. Also, they will not have standard big costs like rent and staffing which has already taken place. In sum, all the existing resources will be used to match the future expenses and costs as CCMC consider their pricing strategy. Therefore, if (running) expenses are low, and if cost of production will be low, then CCMC will have the ability to define lower selling cost margins, thus offer lower prices in the

market. In this way it is believed that CCMC will gain competitive advantage and attract more customers through their low cost pricing, achieving higher demand for CCMC's services.

CCMC believes that by the end of the third year of funding period they will have a clear picture of where they are standing regarding their products, services and costs and how they will correspond with the market's prices. They will use this as a basis in combination with their previous budgets and therefore they will be able to price accordingly.

4. Distribution and Support Strategy

CCMC use their networks, their members, members' networks and employees' networks to disseminate information on their products, services and events. Their productions (audio/visual, podcasts etc), are distributed in digital format. They also, they use their website which (as mentioned before) it receives a large amount of visitors.

They also systematically encourage their members to post information and content on their own websites. Their members also publish CCMC's produced content on their own websites, i.e. Video productions, Videos of trainings and events, Podcasts, Newsletters and Press Releases etc. The use of their members' websites as part of CCMC's distribution strategy is enhanced by the fact that CCMC offers web design training courses to their members in order for them to have the ability to perform this part.

CCMC also formulates and uses a social media distribution strategy, in order to promote their products / services / events through social media like Facebook (tools like "groups", "friends", "fan pages", "events"), Twitter (short, immediate message feeds). YouTube is also an important service as all of CCMC's video productions are published on their YouTube channel and additionally CCMC uses the new capabilities of YouTube for further social networking.

CCMC has also systematized regular communication with its members and public, via regular electronic messaging such as a weekly newsletter, Facebook and Twitter messaging, sending links of produced content and, enrollment forms for upcoming trainings and events. This kind of promotion and distribution methods invoke heavily the much useful word of mouth.

Additionally, in order for CCMC to promote their products/services/events and to also distribute their productions, CCMC tries to get as much as free mass

media coverage as possible, They attend as guests at various TV and Radio shows of mainstream TV and Radio channels. This is done in order to reach their target market and broader masses (e.g. those that cannot reach CCMC's work through the Internet), to get their work known and to distribute their productions via these channels as well.

Regarding distributing to clients, the actual distribution depends on their clients' needs and capacity (abilities). E.g. distributing a video production via the internet obviously depends on the client's website capabilities. If their client's website cannot be used as a distribution mean (cannot support video/podcasts), then CCMC will distribute this content with other means, or offer the client training and technical assistance with this capability. In this way they offer their clients capabilities they wouldn't have on their own, making CCMC an indispensable partner for their clients and giving them a special position which their competitors do not have. CCMC aims for close cooperation with clients, both during the distribution and after delivery support. This increases customer satisfaction and emphasizes the recognition of the acquired skills.

Further to the online digital distribution of productions, CCMC offers "tangible" media, e.g. video/audio on DVD/CD, tape and printed means of distribution e.g. produced brochures.

Regarding trainings and individual trainings, delivery of service and support depends on the background of each client: depending on their needs, capabilities and circumstances, CCMC will attend to a client accordingly, providing specific needed skills, such as post-training support e.g. if a client goes through a media crisis, CCMC will provide support for assessment and measurement for a specific situation and provide support on specific questions that a client may face during an interview with a mass media.

Distribution is regularly slowed down by the fact that CCMC is lacking on resources for needed translation services. They need translations for their operations and also skilled and knowledgeable employees or volunteers in Greek, Turkish and English language. However, currently they are not able to cover this need efficiently, as they did not predict it would be on such a high demand. They do not have the capacity (staff / time capacity) to perform it quickly and this is a weakness. Unless CCMC will be able to cover this demand in the future they may lose clients, since translations are needed to be performed quickly. It is still a time consuming job, resulting to leave behind other more productive tasks; this is an inherited weakness. As a remedy, CCMC currently offers language training on holidays and weekends, in order for them and their members to become competent.

Another hindrance in the distribution process is the fact that CCMC's members are sometimes found to be lacking proper scheduling with regards cooperating with CCMC. i.e. they do not fully comply with the time terms of production, delivery and support (e.g. they wait until the last minute to ask for a video production that needs at least a week of preparation and allocation of resources). Maybe a part of the Cypriot mentality, it seems that CCMC's members do not fully understand and estimate the importance of time management (preparation, logistics, production, distribution, reporting). This hinders the proper distribution and support, as time and resources become overstressed.

As a suggested remedy to the above, CCMC could offer additional training for project management for audio/video productions, in order to educate their members, be more efficient in the future cooperation with CCMC and therefore make the distribution process run more smoothly.

Based on CCMC's metrics of performance, so far products and services are delivered 75% successfully. Therefore, they will apply for funding for a period of time. CCMC calculates that in a six month period, after the receiving of the

second funding, they will be able to reach the desired levels of production and distribution performance.

5.a. A “Good” Promotion Activity

Event / “What's your Story?” project exhibition

An advertising campaign of CCMC we consider as “good”, is the campaign for the Opening Event of the CCMC, which took place along with the “What's your Story?” project exhibition. An interesting point of this campaign, was the use of the “What's your Story?” project as a call for public participation to contribute their own “stories” for this project – thus attracting attention both for the “What's your Story?” project itself and for the Opening Event.

A strong point for the success of the campaign was the appearance and participation of international celebrities in the Opening Event and Exhibition. This was promoted during the campaign and had indeed attracted attention of the press and the public. The celebrities were Jimmy Carter (served as the 39th President of the United States), Desmond Tutu (South African activist and Christian cleric, known from the anti-Apparheid struggle) and Lakhdar Brahimi, (a veteran United Nations envoy and advisor), under their capacity as members of the “Elders” group (www.theelders.org). The “ Elders' ” capacity as an international organization of prominent leaders promoting peace building and reconciliation, was not only used in the promotion of the event as another point for attracting media's attention and to attract contributions for the “What's your Story?” project exhibition; but also to pass the message of what CCMC aims to contribute to the community by “empowering a media literate and active society”. Also, the promotion campaign had used the fact that the three celebrities would also perform the opening ceremony of CCMC. So, the Opening Event, ceremony and exhibition took place on the 9th of December 2009, whom the three men had expressed their support for the new centre.

Another factor for the success of the campaign (and of the Opening Event / Exhibition itself) was novelty. CCMC and the concept of the “Community

Media Centre” was something new for Cyprus. Also, the “What's your Story?” project was also something that took place for the first time in Cyprus. This was another point of success for the campaign and the event, as the element of novelty attracted curiosity.

Another point for the success of the campaign was the originality of the “What's your Story?” project and the way it was exhibited. The reason CCMC exhibited the public’s contributions for “What’s your Story?” project (boards with audio/visual/video messages from the public) in the opening event, was to encourage the public to participate and to attract attendance. At the event, those “stories” were showcased, through multimedia installations, video projections, photographs and stories collected from across Cyprus. This has reinforced the campaign's message of what role CCMC wants to perform as a medium of Community exchange of information and communication; in parallel to Desmond Tutu’s comments: “the community media centre could be a vehicle for these stories to surface.”

CCMC has also used originality for the promotion of the “What's your Story?” project itself. It had issued and disseminated an invitation for participation in the form of a postcard, with an original and appealing design and an inspiring message inviting people to “*grab your mobile phones, webcams, voice recorders, camcorders or even pen and paper and tell us: **what’s your story?***”.

For the promotion campaign, a dedicated website for the “What's your Story?” project was launched, providing a catchy, memorable phrase in the URL: www.whats-your-story.info (now redirects to the official CCMC website).

Additionally of the abovementioned means, CCMC has also utilized social media tools (Facebook, Twitter) and word of mouth in the campaign. It should be noted that CCMC is investing a lot of effort in utilizing the new “alternative” media, for communication, distribution, promotion and mobilization purposes.

Another point that contributed to the campaign's ability to reach a wider audience, was that all campaign promotion materials and communication was released in three languages (Greek / Turkish / English). This, combined by the fact that the event / exhibition took place in the neutral Green line (where CCMC's premises are located), it could be accessible easier from both sides of the island.

The aim of the campaign and of the event/exhibition was to promote CCMC as an intercommunal and multicultural initiative that “deals with the unheard voice, the unseen challenges, the untold story, revealing to the communities, aspects of our reality and our society that may not already be obvious (...) aiming for community development, increasing community members’ awareness and encouraging action on important issues”.

The Event and exhibition was well-attended, with many representatives of civil society, media professionals, artists and members of the diplomatic community.

Following up to the event / exhibition, “What’s your Story?” is still an ongoing project, in continuation to what was presented in the Opening Event. CCMC has recently launched a new campaign for the project. “What's you Story?” has the form of short film series, where CCMC is working on its own series of short films with each episode highlighting personal experiences of people living in all areas of Cyprus. The projections welcomes “stories” like anecdotes, thoughts, testimonies and memories about themselves and encourage anybody who feels they have something to say, to participate. The submission could be a photo, a postcard, a sound file, a found object, picture drawing, a postcard, or video a clip from user’s webcam.

CCMC will be planning future exhibitions to showcase these stories and creations.

5.b. A “Bad” Promotion Activity

The campaign for ‘Media Mix 2010’ event

CCMC had organized a promotion campaign for the “Media Mix 2010” event which took place on the 29th of September 2010.

The event was aiming to give the chance to CCMC members to meet with CCMC’s specialist media consultants. It also aimed to bring Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot media, as well as civil society representatives from organisations and community groups.

By this, the idea of the event was to give the opportunity to journalists and civil society organisations to meet, connect and explore the potential of community-based media and therefore to forge better links and share ideas. Also, to bring media figures from both communities together to talk about how they could work together.

In the campaign to promote the event and to attract the abovementioned target groups, the fact that the event took place in Nicosia’s buffer zone aimed to give a message of unity, with the objective to succeed this “mixing”-and also to make it easier for people from both sides of the island to attend. Additionally, CCMC considered that the choice of the event venue, the high-class Chateau Status Grand Hall, would be attractive for the promotion campaign.

In order to add to the event's attractiveness, CCMC had stated in the promotion campaign that in the event there'd be a display of the video productions produced over the past year by the CCMC, as well as the premiere of its showreel, demonstrating the work of the centre in creating productions and offering training workshops and dedicated support for local non-governmental organisations.

In terms of attendance, the promotion campaign had indeed succeeded in attracting people to come. But the campaign's aim to, in effect, produce more synergies, had failed.

CCMC's campaign failed to achieve the hoped results because it failed to provide a link that CCMC and community media could be utilised as a mechanism for building bridges between the communities and their media outlets.

The campaign had actually suffered from its design phase, because it lacked a clear vision and goals and therefore a lack of focus on what CCMC really wanted to achieve. Subsequently, the campaign failed to convey the message that this event would be something more than a “come-get a drink-chat a bit-and leave” kind of event.

The campaign's design had only focused on the attendance aspect: getting the target groups and the desired number of people to come. As a measure for success of the campaign, the organizers had only put a criterion of 100 people, and they thought that if they could just meet the criterion of attendance, then that would be enough to get the people magically start talking to each other and network.

Subsequently, due to the lack of vision, the actual organization of the event was not well implemented. The organizers of the campaign believed that participants (representatives from media, organizations, journalists, the Civil Society and the CCMC members) would open-up, talk to each other and network by themselves, but this did not happen. People just came, had a drink, hang around a bit and left. Indeed if there was clear vision, organization could have been done better e.g.: CCMC could plan an activity for the participants to encourage them to mingle.

By talking to the management of CCMC, what we regard as the greatest shortcoming in this campaign was the failure to convey the message, to build an image about CCMC that it could serve as an “access point” to any

stakeholder (media, journalist, organization, community member) who wishes to access an audience on a community level, or build cooperations with the media, other organizations and the community in general.

6. Two external challenges CCMC is currently facing

Challenges by External Economic factors: (USD / EUR exchange rates in relation with the Global Economic Recession).

Although the global economic recession currently does not affect CCMC in the terms of funds (since they have secured funding for 3 years), however, the currency exchange rates do affect CCMC significantly, because they are funded on US Dollars and they have to pay in Euros in Cyprus.

Therefore, the exchange value of Euro / Dollar affects CCMC in cases where e.g. the value of US Dollar as currency is weakened (against the Euro), so CCMC wouldn't be able to carry out all their activities because this means it would take more USDs to exchange for a given EUR-equivalent value in order to buy services and material.

Furthermore, CCMC is affected by the interest rates on the USD / EUR exchange, as banks change in order to benefit on the commission. The trends of the USD / EUR interest rates are highly influenced by the policies and the interest rates set by the European Central Bank (ECB) and by the Federal Reserve (Fed).

Of course, the value of USD is influenced by the uncertainty for the future of the economic landscape in the USA and on the possible success or failure of current USA's policies of "the road to recovery".

On the other hand, the Euro is also facing challenges regarding its trust as a (hard) currency, since some member states of the Eurozone are currently facing serious budget deficits with high uncertainty on how quickly and successfully will be able to remedy this. Ironically, this current crisis the EUR is facing as a currency somewhat benefits CCMC, since in this current period the USD's value against the EUR is at the strongest point of the last couple of years. But, a potential serious crisis in the Euro, e.g. collapse of Euro as a currency, or the exit of strong EU economies from the Eurozone, would affect

the Cyprus economy and therefore it would affect the buying capacity of the Cypriot companies and hence the demand of CCMC's services.

Therefore, although in the beginning it was mentioned that the current global economic recession does not affect CCMC in the terms of funds, it does affect CCMC in other different ways.

Challenges by Political Factors: The Cyprus Political Landscape and the developments on the Cyprus Political Issue

CCMC's own existence, mission and operations as an organization are directly affected by the political landscape in Cyprus, both in the long term and on an everyday basis.

Even simple everyday aspects affect CCMC because of the political situation. For example, CCMC's premises are situated on the Green line, immediately after the Cyprus Police checkpoint (after the Fulbright Foundation). The Green Line regime for the movement of people, along with the movement of people current de facto status caused by the occupation, hinder the easy movement of people in order to come to the CCMC premises. This is caused by the inconvenient road system near the Green line (both sides of it) and by the delays caused by police checks (especially by the regime in the north). Also, because of the Green line topology (which reflects the dreadfulness of the current political situation), even parking for cars is not convenient, thus further hindering the easy access to the CCMC premises.

The situation would become even worse if there is a crisis in the political landscape that would cause the closing of the checkpoints for the movement of people. This would in effect block off CCMC from a significant part of its customers and partners with catastrophic consequences for the organization.

On the other hand, there is the possibility of a settlement of the Cyprus problem. In this case CCMC will have to redesign its whole strategy in order to keep being attractive to donors for other reasons than political, in order to achieve sustainability. Even this occurs, CCMC will remain relevant and for

this proving their work's worth is significant for them. What is attractive to donors is reconciliation measures by in effect keeping bringing the communities together apart from political linkages, i.e. to center their activities on trainings that have nothing to do with the political surroundings.

In order to achieve this future vision, for now, they have to make themselves known as wider as possible with the different communities on the island. CCMC will have to plan from now on different scenarios because in the modern world nothing is constant and change is inevitable-not only in the political context. Because CCMC is based on the community level for the long term, they must establish the "Community Media" concept by making it stronger.

Concluding, in order for CCMC to cope with any future turbulences and challenges that are caused by the shiftings in the political landscape, it has to keep sustainability in focus, both in terms of service/products offers and by keep being attractive to donors for other reasons than political, no matter what is happening in the political surrounding.

7.a. Three “Good” elements of the CCMC’s website

1. Easy of use

We find the CCMC website (www.cypruscommunitymedia.org) easy to use. The structure of the website is crystal clear regarding where the wanted information is allocated. Therefore, the website visitor can find the information she/he needs easily and can access it with only a few clicks, instead of having to go into too much depth.

The videos' colors, visual appearance of videos and text is appealing, the colors match with the corporate colors of CCMC (e.g. menu colors), thus the consistency makes the website navigation more intuitive and easier for the visitor.

The background color is white which makes the website easy to read for a prolonged period of time, unlike other websites that have colored background that causes eyesore after some time. This adds to the balance between simplicity and attractive design; a combination that enhances the website's ergonomics.

The website does not have the “stereotypical” structure of menu/contents and each section breakdown is interesting, rather than e.g. giving very long texts that need lot of scrolling to read.

2. A Robust Online Calendar Facility

The website has a Calendar facility which shows that the company does have an ongoing process going on and by that it gives to the website visitor the impression that CCMC is an “alive” organization.

The Calendar is updated constantly and schedules until February of 2011 (as accessed on 10/12/2010). Constant updating of the calendar is important, as It would have been a liability to have a “blank” or outdated calendar like other websites have; this gives a bad impression to the website visitor that the organization is not operating any more, even if this is not the case.

Moreover, the calendar gives an insight to the visitor about the lifecycle of CCMC's activities, events and projects and in effect, it provides an internal view of production cycle to the clients/members/visitors, making them able to

plan ahead and make the necessary arrangements in their schedule in order to attend or organize/book an activity.

Also, the calendar facility comes in handy for CCMC's staff, when e.g. they are away from office and therefore can have access to the organization's calendar via their web browsers, from any place with internet access. This enhances organizing and productivity.

3. Multilinguality reaches broader audience

Most of the website information is available in three languages Greek, English and Turkish. This makes the website appealing to a greater audience, than most of the other Cypriot websites (that may have information in Greek and English; or even only in English). This gives CCMC an advantage that other local organizations do not have.

Multilinguality is directly linked with CCMC's operations that geographically cover the whole island - both the areas controlled by the Republic of Cyprus and the northern Turkish occupied areas. For this reason, CCMC allocates a significant amount of resources (staff and time) in order to keep up with translations, not only for the website, but also for products, communication, productions etc.

Multilinguality in CCMC's website is necessary because the organization cooperates with non-Greek speakers (that use the English language for communication), and also with organizations / individuals that can only speak fluently Greek or Turkish. Also, multilinguality is important as CCMC wants to play a pluralistic, linking role between the two communities for purposes (among others) of reconciliation and trust building.

7.b. Three “Bad” elements of the CCMC’s website

1. Search Engine visibility problems

Unfortunately, the website does not appear first on the Google search results (which is the most popular search engine), which would facilitate internet surfers to locate the website easier. This limits CCMC’s online visibility that is vital in order to fulfill their goal to assist researchers to draw information and attract more attention.

This problem arises from different reasons:

- CCMC has invested on their “Wordpress” blog too much (<http://cypruscommunitymediacentre.wordpress.com/>) which it is still active and has pre-existed the official website. Therefore, the search engines “prefer” CCMC’s blog on the search results, instead of the official website.
- They call themselves “CCMC” too much, instead of the full name “Cyprus Community Media Centre”. In consequence, this applies to other websites that link to them using different name variations - an inhibitor for high search engine results ranking.
- Although multilinguality of the website is, content-wise, a plus, its current technical implementation does not help Search Engine Optimization, for various reasons like tagging, HTML headers, website components translations etc.
- There is a confusion created regarding the British English spelling of “Centre” and the American English spelling of “Center”. Although nowadays some Search Engines disambiguate British / American English words in the search results, it still causes lower results ranking.
- The website URLs are not Search Engine Optimized, i.e. they are not concise and meaningful. For example, the URL of the “Events” section, currently is the too long and meaningless [“http://www.cypruscommunitymedia.org/index.php?option=com_contact&view=contact&id=1&Itemid=37&lang=en”](http://www.cypruscommunitymedia.org/index.php?option=com_contact&view=contact&id=1&Itemid=37&lang=en), whereas, if it was [“http://www.cypruscommunitymedia.org/events”](http://www.cypruscommunitymedia.org/events) this would be more optimized for the search engines. This can be fixed with an Search Engine Optimization (SEO) tool and better tagging of each web page. This will add furthermore to facilitating “human” readability of the URLs,

therefore it can be linked easier by both people and Search Engine robots.

- In order to remedy the “CCMC” / “Cyprus Community Media Centre” name conflict that causes the ranking difficulty with the Search Engines, we suggest that CCMC should go ahead and reserve “www.ccmc.eu” as an additional domain name for their website; in order to harness the “CCMC” name that is available around in other websites and help the Search Engines to make the connection of the terms “CCMC” and “Cyprus Community Media Centre”.

2. Website does not meet “one-stop community information” purpose

One of the goals CCMC had set, was to become a central point of community-related information dissemination and exchange. Currently, CCMC's website does not meet this purpose.

“Community-based information” means information of “what is going on”, rather than articles someone could find in a major newspaper (of Cyprus and abroad) that do not provide the community aspect, the background story that underlies an article.

CCMC's website should provide a “focal point” that e.g. someone from abroad could go and get informed about what is going on in the island on a community level. An accurate, independent source that a visitor can draw information and also for events that happen in Cyprus. This would be appealing to many people and mainly for Cypriot students studying abroad.

This “focal point” could be in the form of a portal within the website, where a visitor could get informed easily about what is happening with “just a click”; in effect a “one-stop community information” space.

3. Poor “Podcasts” section

Podcasts are multimedia files (usually audios) that are produced and distributed in a portable format, i.e.: easily transferable through various devices, systems and multimedia reproduction software. Podcasts as a tool, are part of the social media new wave and can be easily shared and streamed through various platforms. Since social media tools have an important role for CCMC, therefore the “Podcasts & Audio” section (found under menu option “CCMC presents”) should be equally appealing and facilitate functionality for the website visitors.

Currently, this is not the case. The Podcasts section needs further improvement to meet good standards.

Here are some weaknesses of the section:

- The Pictures for each Podcast are all the same and do not provide a visual representation of what each podcast is about. Instead, there is a generic “CCMC Podcasts” image for all. Instead of this, for each podcast there should be a different picture e.g. of the speaker, or of the event the podcast is taken from.
- The download option for each podcast, which is why the podcasts are there in the first place, is not obvious. It's just a “Download Podcast” text at the end of the long description. In modern website design standards we always find an icon for a downloadable item that intuitively we follow (e.g. a folder icon with an arrow pointing downwards); this should also be the case for each podcast.
- Texts of descriptions for each podcast are too long. Since the description is there to only accompany the podcast (which is the focal point of this section), it should be shorter and maybe accompanied by a “Read More” option in case the description text is longer, or if the visitor cares to read furthermore about a specific podcast. The visitor should not be shown texts that may, or may not be interesting to him/her; this should be a “Read More” option of the visitor. And for laptops with small screens, long texts are not convenient, since the user has to scroll down to see all the podcasts. And currently, there are just three.
- “Online Play” option should be put more into the focus, instead of being just three small “play / pause / stop” icons at the end. They should be bigger and presented as a main, more obvious option.
- There is a misleading text for each podcast: “Listen and **download** the third CCMC podcast ‘What’s the Story?’ **here**”. Usually when a visitor sees the words “download”, “here”, intuitively she/he expects the word “here” to be clickable and lead to a download. Here, it doesn't happen: the “here” text is not clickable, the user has to scroll down in order to find the download link, and in this case it's not certain that the user will notice it, or bother finding it; she/he may assume that the text “here” is an omitted hyperlink.