5:15-6:30 Session A: Working session on *Sustainability Communications*

This will be a working session on creating strategies to better communicate the story of OneSTL, and sustainability in general, to the region. We will discuss how to better utilize social media; cross-marketing events and news with organizations that have similar goals; developing the brand recognition of OneSTL; documenting and writing stories about people working on sustainability in the region; and strategizing how to educate people about and get buy-in for the regional goals.

**Notes:**

- Goal-pledge structure. What to get the word out about and build momentum.
- Interested in telling stories that explain why people should care about sustainability.

- Consider with social media, need to have a consistent voice, especially if it’s a team of people working on it who are making different posts.
- Also consider audience and goal. Who are we talking to? General education, professional audiences?
- Consider engaging key stakeholders, use the term “outreach” instead of “education.” In terms of getting buy-in for regional goals. Do you want to have an instrument go out that offers evidence that people in this region really want this to happen. Can be used to target engagement/outreach.
- Who are we speaking to as communicators? Are we speaking as OneSTL? Are we trying to drive people to the Sustainability Lab? We need a strategic plan.
- It’s got to be people who are willing and have the time. Initial target was organizations/biz with people who are working on sustainability issues in their community. They can go back to the community. Not really interested in doing it as a broad, public engagement.
- In addition to voice, we need a very concise list of talking points. So, voice and message.
- You’ve got to know your audience before you get to your voice. We need a communications plan for the for-profit global corporate entity and another one for the grassroot change makers. Lots of whos.
- Bring it back to the strategic goal. What are we trying to do or accomplish? Who do you want to reach?
- People respond really effectively to why volunteers volunteer. You are coming representing yourself and why you are interested in this organization.
Once we’ve got the voice/audience/message, it would be worth the effort to identify the spokespeople. People are much more likely to listen to you if are seen as a leader or have some credibility. Find the right five or ten spokespeople.

Agreed. We need community leaders, not so much political people. People who have clout and credibility.

Aaron is happy to have a group of people who can serve as spokespeople, as opposed to just him.

The need for celebrity power, or people with “natural” credibility.

Trying to bring it back. Do we need a social media team, a group to get the message and pipe it out.

Brief discussion of we vs. more neutral language like “OneSTL partners”

With social media, good to test it out and see if it’s scalable. For example, porchlight project. Gave a couple reasons why with a picture. People would share that. Then they become ambassadors of that particular brand. It’s not just one person sending out a message. The audience will start to dictate what they want to hear or respond to. It’s just about testing. Sometimes things work, sometimes they don’t.

We are going to have ways to adopt or endorse regional goals.

Before we get to asking for volunteers. Can we talk more about how this group communicates with itself?

Venture Café 101. It might be good at each one of this lab sessions to have one of these “hey you are new here, let’s get you up to speed.” Sustainability Lab ambassadors.

EQ Magazine’s emails. A great source of info on the tech startup scene in STL. Really compelling, always want to click their links.

Great way of highlighting the stories. We could do something like that. The key is that the stories have real value and real good information. You can see what’s happening around the region.

Boundless(?), company at T-Rex, really interested in mapping.

Smaller groups communicating by email.

We should do something physical in the labs. Maybe a bulletin board with notes about this is what I am working on, this is what I need help on. I want to know what you are doing, want to be able to share it. Something more casual. We all have something going on.

Civil engineering working on a raingarden. I think one thing that keeps me inspired is that I read different stories from around the country where I read about different sustainability efforts that are going on.

Need to remember that when we talk about audience and voice, we are really talking about the whole region. Can’t just be solely focused on the city of STL or STL county. There are many groups working on the same stuff but not working together. Get different groups to know that this is going on. More collaboration.

There’s a TV show on Channel 11 that highlighted great things that people and organization are doing in the city of STL. Let’s not forget about TV as a medium.

Yes, let’s get some videos made.

James Thomas helped produced Morning Blend St. Louis. These days, TV has changed, it’s no longer just making TV shows, but it’s all digital content. It airs on TV and then you edit it to distribute it across all kinds of channels.

Less than 8 percent of the American public are climate deniers. When you look at people who come to the STL zoo, the vast majority believe it and they are asking what they can do about it. We are not giving people enough information about what they can do.
-The zoo should be one of our outlets for outreach. We have to keep you engaged and figure out the messaging that you can use.

Social Media Team: Jenn, Katy Mike, Christian, Ehrin, interns and students, Lisa

Lab 101 team: Seth/Wash U, Katy Mike, Spencer, Christian, Frank, Brandon

Content/Stories: Jenn, Lois, Sunni, Steve, Tom, Lisa, Katy-Mike, James (video)

Communications Plan: Lacy, Tiffany, Lois, David, Seth and Katy Mike will reach out to Wash U and UMSL for volunteers

Video Content: James Thomas