

# **The analysis of method of communication municipal office**

**(Project MUNISS, team no. 11)**

The official aim of the project was to “*submit an optimization proposal of existing way of communication between Municipal authority Slavkov u Brna and other entities*”. Therefore we were able to focus on broad range of subjects during working out the project, for example clients of the authority, citizens, entrepreneurs or state-funded institutions. Due to the unwillingness of entrepreneurs we were forced to aim at communication efficiency between municipality and citizens. We identified crucial determinants of relation between above mentioned subjects:

- Mutual communication between authority and citizens
- Citizens’ concern for the development in the city
- Services provided by authority and their quality

During field research we found out unpleasant actuality, that only few citizens of Slavkov are concerned for affairs in the city. This fact is extremely unfavourable for effort to enhance municipal administration, because the interest of the citizens is the key variable of administration system.

We decided to divide our work into five sections. Each section is in fact unique, because it is focused on specific way of communication between municipality and citizens:

- Outcomes of communication analysis
- Presentation of the city on the Internet and online communication
- Another partial elements of communication
- Relations with citizens: questionnaire survey among citizens
- Comparison of the ways of communication and communication tools between the city Slavkov u Brna and Brno

Content of this report is a brief summary of project results; it outlines the solutions of the mentioned problems. We tried to appraise feasibility of suggested solutions and also proposed measures which should be adopted by Municipal authority of Slavkov u Brna in an effort to improve communication with citizens. The suggestions will be systematically arranged according to above mentioned work structure.

## **1. Analysis of communication outputs**

This part is focused on the assessment of the success of the municipal authority to fulfil the directive *Public Relations*. It is understandable that the municipal authority is not able to concentrate on the all parts contained in directive because of capacity, financial and effectiveness limitations. Therefore, we expressed the recommendations, on which points,

would be better to address the attention. It is primarily the information contained in the printed media.

***Slavkovský spravodaj and its Attachments.*** The newsletter is the key source for obtaining information relating to the city for major part of the inhabitants and therefore it is the most effective tool of communication. Based on our research, we note, that the part of citizens complained about lack of understanding of the information contained in the newsletter. Therefore it would be important to make the information available and understandable to every citizen.

***Envelopes, communications and letters.*** In this case is methodology of directive set correctly. Municipal authority has elaborated and united visual style. It is an appropriate way to draw attention of citizens and tourists to identify documents relating to the city. They should not hesitate and start with implementation of this project.

***Leaflets.*** They are an appropriate and effective way of communication with citizens. It is not necessary to let them to be distributed by external company, but due to the cost savings, the volunteers from citizens could be used for this activity, or it could be part of the city newsletter. In this case, we can watch the effective use of uniform visual style that would help citizens identify undesirable advertising flyers from city's ones.

***Annual report on the city activities.*** In the case of extension of this form of communication between municipal authority and citizens, the potential of increasing interest about activities of city is growing. Therefore, we suggest that an annual report on the activities of the city should be the part of the *Slavkovský spravodaj* each year.

***City budget.*** According to our survey, the information about the city budget is just one of the most interesting information for citizens. Therefore, we believe that providing such information to citizens; contribute positively to a better citizen-city relationship.

***Books and annual publications.*** Book publications with historical themes relating to the city are good representative instrument of each city, which possess a rich history and tradition.

## **2. Communication of city on the internet**

The content of this section is the evaluation of the city's Web site. In this chapter it is firstly identified imperfection which we come across during the analysis. Next we try to outline way how to improve the current situation.

***Monolingual Website.*** A major shortcoming of the city with such a strong history and tourist potential is the accessibility to the website only in the Czech language. It is therefore essential to draw attention to this fact. Initially, the English version could relate only to a few selected links, which have significant importance for foreign tourists.

***Complicated character of the Website.*** Especially chaotic layout of the website is the main shortcoming that we observed immediately during the initial visiting the city website. The main objective should be better lucidity of website. For better understanding, in our project there are incorporated two examples of effective lucidity of websites in cities Stuttgart and Brno.

***Non-functional "full text search"; absence of the contact to provider of the website.*** At first sight it may be a trivial matter, but it may create the negative picture of municipal authority in the eyes of the public. And these are the mistakes that can be solved in a minute by contacting the provider of the website.

***The lack of higher awareness of the officers at the municipal authority.*** The site is missing interactivity and better provision of information about municipal's authority officers. One of the ways to improve the current situation is that after you click on the name of the official it displays his working hours or holiday, business trip or other reason of his absence.

### **3. Additional communication elements**

In this section, we attempted to identify some other communication elements, except the above mentioned, in which we see space for the improvement.

***Information boards in the city.*** First, what a visitor who decides to travel to Slavkov by train notices is the lack of directional signs, which should guide him to the city centre. Information panels are not in the best condition and their information value is very unbalanced.

***Information boards at the Municipal Authority.*** There is a similar situation as in the city, if not worse. In the municipal areas, there are countless arrows, tables and labels on the doors which contribute to confusion. The solution to the current disturbing situation would be undoubtedly the creation of large information board at the entrance to the main building. The localization of the board is elaborated in more detail in the main work.

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***Areas in the building of Municipal Authority.*** The environment in the Municipality Authority could be better organized. To utilize the empty space in the building we suggest filling them for example with exhibitions or presentation with twin city.

***United visual style.*** Analysis of single visual style has already been mentioned above, at this point, we would like to express the possibility of implementation. On the implementation

should be involved themselves Slavkov's citizens, including children of primary school and people should decide about the best option.

**Promotion of cultural events.** Based on the analysis of the information space in the city we cannot evaluate very positively promoting of their ranking events. Therefore, the local authority should draw more attention to this issue.

**The creation of new communication channels.** According to us Municipal Authority should use increasingly offer of new of modern communication tools such as YouTube, or create a mobile application that secures the office service through smartphones.

#### **4. Research among citizens of Slavkov**

The main part of our work consists of research among the citizens. It was conducted through quantitative method of questionnaire survey in the city. The questionnaire was formulated to help us determine how citizens evaluate office staff, the problems they encounter at the office and how they evaluate its operation. The purpose was also to determine whether citizens enjoy all the ways the office communicates with people.

The first question was aimed to ascertain how often people used to visit municipal authority. 95% of people visited it only once a year or less. Therefore municipal authority should strive for a friendly approach, because there is a possibility, that negative experience with office, can be kept in mind for a long time. So it is very important to deal with each client very individually.

The next group of questions focused on the citizen's satisfaction with municipal authority. We focused mainly on services that officers provide the speed of handling with affairs and overall officer's willingness to be helpful to citizens. In all three areas we got very positive reviews.

In the next area of our research, we try to find the most important sources of information for citizens. 47% of them gains information from *Slavkovský spravodaj*, following by official website of city, which are source of information for about 35% population. The rest answers stated the official board. 67% of the citizens who read the *Slavkovský spravodaj* regularly rated the information contained therein as useful. And 37% of citizens conducted in our survey would like to know more about expenditures of the municipal authority.

On the final question, whether the citizens are satisfied with the activities that municipal authority provides, 88% of them rated it positively.

## **5. Comparison of communication of the Municipal authority at Slavkov u Brna and Municipality of Brno**

The last part of the thesis is focused on the comparison of communication of the municipal authority Slavkov u Brna and the Municipality of Brno. In this chapter there can be found the fundamental differences that lead to different approaches to the subject, but also the common characteristics that these two offices are distinguished by.

## **Conclusion**

Our work serves as a small guide on how to increase the interest of citizens in the activities of city. The possibility to implement some of it depends mainly on the office itself and favourable financial situation. We enjoyed being a part of this project helping Slavkov in improvement its current situation and we would like to wish them every success in the future implementation of the project. It is a very positive and important that there is still an interest to improve because there is always room for improvement.