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Marketing and Communications

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THE
WORLD
FEDERATION

OF KHOJA SHIA ITHNA-ASHERI MUSLIM COMMUNITIES

Registered Charity in UK No. 282303



Marketing and Communications

1.0 Introduction

The pledge made by Dr. Hassam in 2003 regarding, 'Enhancing our delivery system by way of a Public Relations Desk using our young professionals and the huge strides that IT offers' has been executed and is now embedded within the organisation.

The Marketing and Communications segment of the organisation commenced immediately during the first term of Dr. Hassam's leadership (2003-2006) setting up a dedicated Personal Relations Desk which fulfilled the first part of the pledge. Secondly a youthful yet professional team was set up and lead by another young and professional ASG in turn satisfying the second part of the pledge. In accomplishing the third part of the pledge numerous technological approaches such as the launch of the new website were initiated.

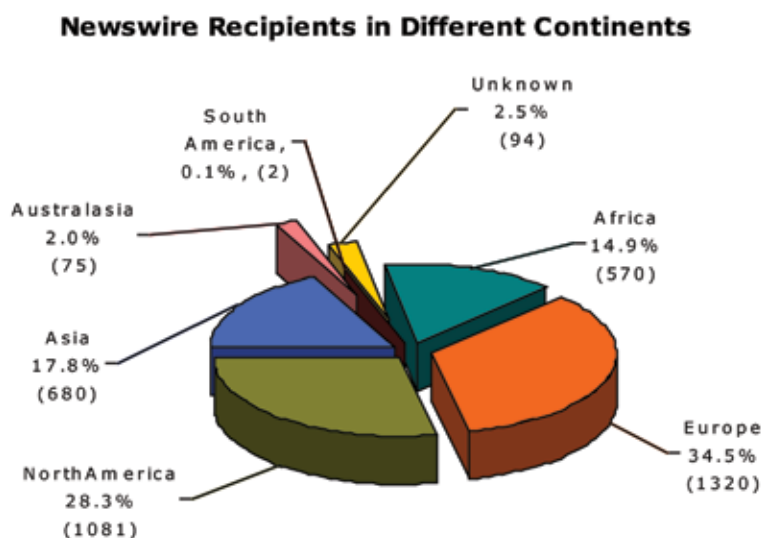
The team consists of seven volunteers based in different parts of the world, in addition to secretariat staff who support some of the time critical activities such as the Newswire. The volunteers provide support through co-ordinating various marketing projects such as writing for external publications and designing brochures.

2.0 Newswires

The World Federation Newswire aims to connect our global community, through electronically increasing awareness of key issues, achievements, activities and projects of our community in different parts of the world. The Newswire was first sent out to subscribers around January 2004, and has continued every week without a single lapse since then.

The Newswire is currently sent to **3,822** individual emails every week in **6** continents. This has been an increase of **858** approximately 28.9% over the last three years since 2006, in the amount of electronically transmitted Newswires.

The following statistic reflects the proportion of recipients of the newswire in different continents





As of August 2009, there have been a remarkable 293 Newswires sent out since its inception.

Also available since June 2006 are the condensed Newswires which is a thorough summary of the Newswire itself, also available in French. There have been over 131 posted condensed Newswires.

The themes included in the Newswire during its early stages primarily focused on issues directly concerning The World Federation. Over time, this has evolved, through incorporating activities of regional federations and Jamaats worldwide, facilitating a single platform for our global community.

Today, the Newswire comprises of four main sections:

1. News and Events – Featuring activities, projects and updates from The World Federation,
2. Regional Federations, and Centres world-wide
3. Focus this Month – Featuring specific areas of The World Federation eg. Ramadhan Relief,
4. Adoption of the NGO Work Plan.
5. Thought of the week – Ranging from Amal recital to other deeply informative topics.
6. E.g. Knowledge and ahadith on night of 15 Shaban
7. Polls section – Obtaining readers’ opinions on important issues concerning the community and organisation. E.g. What would you choose service to community or humanity?

The preparation of the Newswire on a typical week:

Friday: The editorial team regularly receives articles from world-wide centres, and functional areas. Friday is the cut-off point for all articles that would go in the following week’s newswire.



Saturday/Sunday: The drafted articles are sent to Office Bearers and Assistant Secretary General’s for their comments and approval.



Monday: The Final Newswire is passed on for upload as well as compilation of the Condensed Newswire.



Wednesday: The Final Newswire is sent to all newswire subscribers.



An item for information:

The World Federation endeavours to raise awareness of its own activities and events as well as its members' by encouraging its regional federations and their member Jamaats to display the printable newswires on their Masjid notice boards. This is done so that those that are unable to acquire access to internet are made aware of the organisation and the global community's important issues and events. At the same time, the displaying of the newswire stimulates effective discussions amongst members of the community.

Recent visits to various Jamaats regarding the MTP agenda prompted an inspection of how many of them actually present the Newswire on their respective notice boards. The audit result of this inspection was astounding. Out of the 98 Jamaats that were visited only 5 Jamaats actually displayed the newswire. That is a meagre 5.1%. It was duly noted that a few Jamaats electronically distributed the newswire to their members.

3.0 Insight and Infocus

The Insight is composed of issues fundamentally concentrating on The World Federation as well as the regional federations, and are sent to those members who have registered to receive them.

The Infocus is generally regarded as an evolved version of the Insight however this is not true. The Infocus is a separate publication of its own, reporting on activities and events that form a core area of work for The World Federation, e.g. Health, Relief, Islamic Education.

One registers and subscribes for the Insight and Infocus at no cost. On the other hand, The World Federation incurs significant expenses in sending out the final copy to the desired destination. An array of costs is involved including designing, liaising, printing and posting.

The Preparation of the Insight and Infocus follows five stages, they are:

Stage 1: Articles are collected, compiled & edited by the editor who also designs the publication.



Stage 2: Sent to ASG's and select individuals for their comments and feedback.



Stage 3: The comments and feedback are incorporated and sent to ASG's, OB's and SI's.



Stage 4: Final Version is coordinated with graphics designer and printers.

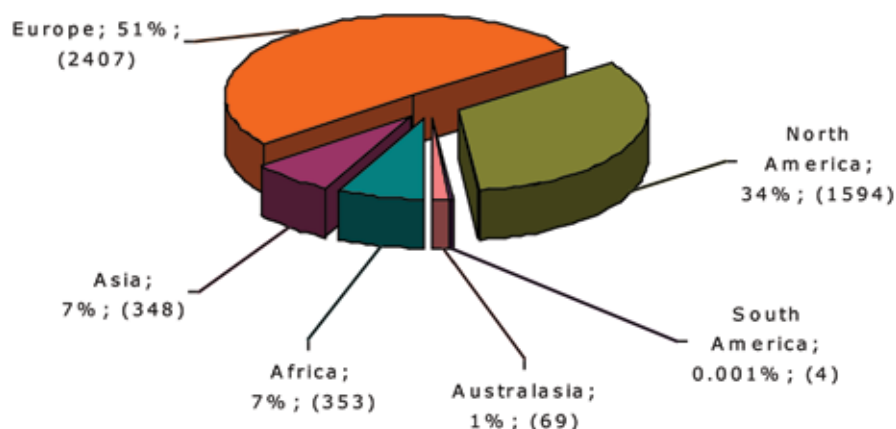


Stage 5: The Final Printed Version is then posted to relevant recipients.



The final copy can take between one and three months for preparation.

Insight & Infocus Postal Recipients in Different Continents



From the above pie chart:

Europe is the largest recipient of the Insight and Infocus, of which 2244 (93%) are posted in U.K alone.

The second largest recipient of the Insight and Infocus is North America, comprising of Canada and USA only who receive 922 (58%) and 672 (42%) respectively.

Asia and Africa share the same proportion of 7% with most postages going to Tanzania 190, (54%) in Africa and UAE in Asia with 170 (49%).

Finally Australasia including Australia and New Zealand receive a total of 69.

There is also due consideration given to South America who receive a total of 4 (0.001%) all of which are posted to the West Indies.



Insight Publications between 2002-2009:-

To date there have been 20 Issues of the Insight that have been sent out since the World Federation's inauguration in 1976. The preparation of the Insight depicts the following stages:

Within the last seven years 10 issues have been published and sent out to relevant subscribers. On average more than one issue is delivered every year.

Insight	Date	Theme	Key Features
Issue 10	Aug-02 Jamad i ul Akher 1423	Tribute	Allamah Sayid Saeed Akhter Rizvi - His life & times encompassing his major academic research on Khoja Shias settlement in East Africa
Issue 11	2002 1423	Commemorating 25 Years in the service of the community	Formation of the World Federation 15-17/10/76 Hajj Medical Mission 1977-1991 Establishment of ZCSS in 1982 Husseini Islamic Centre, Stanmore 1989 Conference 1991
Issue 12	May -03 Rab ul Awwal 1424	WF Secretariat	Aeinullah Eye Clinic - Patna, Iraq Relief fund and progress update Triennial Conference Agenda & Strategic Plan
Issue 13	Oct-03 Shaban 1424	Secretariat CETAB	Dr. Hassan Fazel - World Class Statistician, World Bank Economist & Commissioner of Prog. Higher Education in New Zealand and Malaysia
Issue 14	Mar-04 Muharram 1425	WF Secretariat	Jaffery Kindergarten Nairobi - WF donates £20000 IEB signs agreement with Madrasah in Qum Ali Asghar Water appeal - Raises over £45000
Issue 15	Sep-04 Shaban 1425	WF Secretariat	Remembering Marhum Zulfikar Khimji First Leadership Development Programme WF & NASIMCO sign Brampton Accord
Issue 16	Feb-05 Muharram 1426	WF Secretariat	Kawkabe Khidmat - Mullah Muhsin Jaffer Engaging With Marja'iya Muslim Youth Helpline - Mohammed Mamdani
Issue 17	Aug-05 Jamaada lThaani 1426	WF Secretariat	ZCSS student receives Accolade from India Pres. Catholic Representative visits Dar al Ta'leem History of Khoja Shia Ithna Asheri - Presentation
Issue 18	Oct-05 Ramadhan 1426	Ramadhan Relief	Ramadhan Relief review of 1425 for countries in East Africa, Sub-Continent, Eastern Europe Community Appreciation: Alhaj Nisar Sheraly
Issue 19	Sep-06 Shaban 1427	'One community one vision'	Conference 2006 First Facilitation Skills course launched by WF Establishment of the Autistic Centre in Dar, TZ.
Issue 20	Mar-08 Safar 1429	Youth Capacity Building	Worldwide Youth Camps Excellent Community Service - Br. Murtaza Datoo The Journey Home Documentary

Assessing all the above Issues, the themes are exceptionally broad and are seen as updates by The World Federation in addition to specific items such as featuring personalities and Regional Federations milestones.

The 21st Issue of the Insight is expected in the near future.



The first Infocus was sent in April 2006. From April 2006 to Sept 2007 four issues had been dispatched. However the fifth issue published in September 2008 was not sent out to relevant subscribers of the Infocus. Nonetheless this issue was placed on the website, and is still available for referral. The next issue that followed was less than two months later in November of 2008. After the most recent issue in May 2009 there have been a total of 7 Issues sent out since.

Infocus publications so far:-

Infocus	Date	Theme	Key Features
Issue 1	April 06/ Rabi' al Awwal 1427	Seniors Advisory Board	Senior Advisory Board Goals/Achievements e.g Al Qa'im SOS, Blanket Drive, Hajj Niyaba Milton Keynes Pact, Senior of the Month
Issue 2	Oct. 06/ Ramadhan 1427	Ramadhan Relief	A review on Ramadhan Relief provided in 05 in East Africa, Iran, Iraq etc. Summary of distribution of relief funds.
Issue 3	May 07/ Rabi al Thaani 1428	Islamic Education	MTP Autumn Programme and Syllabus detail Comprehensive Q & A on MTP Remittance form on the MTP for Donations
Issue 4	Sept. 07/ Ramadhan 1428	Ramadhan Relief	A review on Ramadhan Relief provided in 06 in countries like Tanzania, South Africa, Iran Message from Chairman of Disabled Assoc.
Issue 5 (online only)	Sept. 08/ Ramadhan 1429	Ramadhan Relief	Creating awareness on cost of Iftaar In Co- untries like Bosnia, Kenya, Syria, Afghanistan A review on Ramadhan Relief provided in 07
Issue 6	Nov 08/ Dhu'l Qa'dah 1429	Health & Relief	Launch of WF Economic Development Prog. Zainabiya Health Centres & Aeinullah EC Al Qa'im Sponsor our Seniors (SOS) Prog.
Issue 7	May 09/ Jamaad i al Ula 1430	Islamic Education	The IIPS - MTP Four year programme Africa Ta bleegh Task Force (ATTF) Madinah & Bab al Ilm Sh ourt courses

After examining the issues, you will also observe that they each have a single theme in which the area under discussion reported will fall under the main or stated theme. For instance the Ramadhan Relief oriented publication will contain subjects regarding Ramadhan Relief only where other issues are excluded.

The timing of any issue is crucial especially when targeting a specific audience for a specific cause. It is notable that, the Ramadhan Relief Infocus have been delivered on a consistent yearly basis. More importantly the issues have been published around the time of Ramadhan so as to create relevant awareness and simultaneously account for last years donations.



4.0 New Website

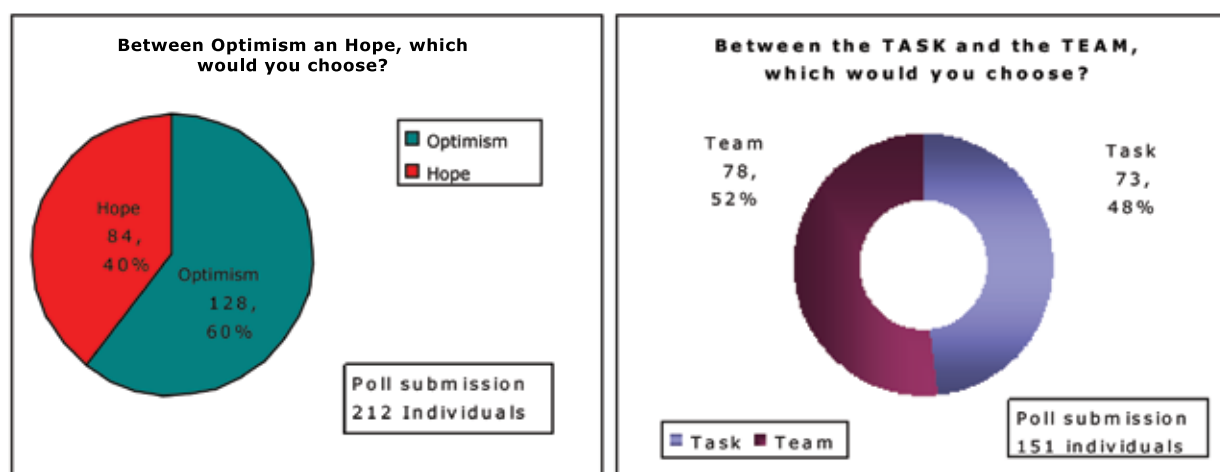
The World Federation launched its new website in May 2008. The site comprises of more features such as many more pictures and illustrations making the website interesting and attractive. In addition to that, the website is updated on a consistent basis, with a Main Feature section conveying the most significant recent activity. Along with that the polls section was also introduced with concise results of all the polls posted on the website.

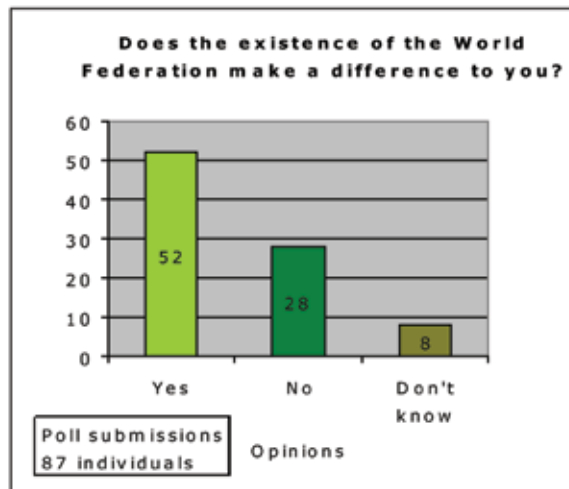
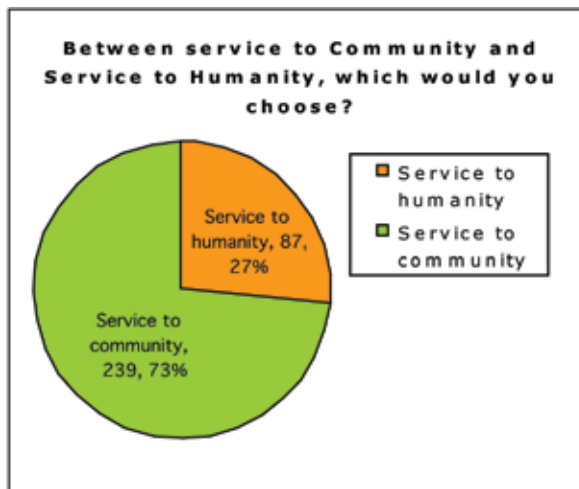
5.0 Polls

The new website is accompanied by 'The Polls section'. The polls were initiated at the same time as the launch of the website in May 2008. The polls were integrated in order to facilitate a more interactive approach amongst members in the community to express their preferences as well as acquiring their opinions on important issues concerning the community and organisation.

The polls are renewed on a monthly basis. Therefore the particular poll remains on the website for approximately a month. So as to enhance the participation of polls, they are accompanied with the weekly newswires where there is a special link for it.

There have been 15 opinion polls that have been carried out, each with a concise result and statistic posted on the website. The following is summary of the last four opinion polls to provide an overview of what the opinion polls area all about.





Evidently the numbers of individuals expressing their opinions have varied considerably, from 87 to 326, although this is in just the last four opinion polls.

Some questions provided results that reflected similar opinions whereas others were differing.

All in all, these polls, presented for an interesting model of understanding peoples needs and feeling at the same time providing vital feedback through which the community can make essential and desired improvements by tailoring the organisations and community's future activities to the needs of its esteemed members.

6.0 Constraints

Availability of key members of the team during office hours in order to make timely decisions.

A diverse array of technological tools are available, whilst this is an opportunity, it can also be a hazard if a wrong investment decision is made.

Changes in regulations, specifically the online donation tool.

7.0 Recommendations

1. With the NGO accreditation, an online platform that unites our organisation with other NGO's, needs to be created. This platform would focus on various health and relief projects we undertake in different parts of the world
2. Identifying modern tools that can be integrated within our website could be fascinating avenues to explore e.g. Podcasts, Online Forums for Discussion and a new donation management system.
3. The creation of a robust database, integrated with online forms, with set targets to increase subscribers to newswires and publications over a defined period of time.