

## **Strategic development of communication at Statistics Finland**

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### ***Abstract***

At the beginning of 2018, Statistics Finland started a process where, by shaking up the present mode of communication activity, we aimed to discover the core of communication. We examined what is the most important core message that should shine through in all our actions. We build concrete communication plans and activities around the clarified core. An external communications agency assisted us in the shake-up. In my presentation, I examine the strategic development process of communication at Statistics Finland and describe the ideas produced by the process.

Statistics Finland is a widely known and trusted public agency in Finland that strives for reliable and impartial communication. The surrounding society has changed fast, and in the wake of fake news and growing data masses, there is ever more demand and need for reliable information. The changing world considerably challenges public debate as well, and requires from various actors agility and readiness to take up debate and tell about their meaning of existence. We must also address problems actively when they appear. Statistics Finland wanted to analyse its communication and renew the strategic guidelines of communication to correspond to the requirements of the changed operational environment.

The communications agency interviewed our key persons, became acquainted with our objectives and other background materials, and examined the possibilities of communication. Based on the situational analysis, the agency arranged two shake-up workshops where we worked together on the core of communication, the strategic marks of communication and communication actions. A concrete plan was built around the core including the modes and activity on three different levels: 1) basic communication, 2) opportunity communication, and 3) big communication actions.

In the communication plan, all concrete measures for each target have schedules and responsibility persons for the following year. Without a plan the strategy and even the finest core message are just left in the drawer.

At the same time as the strategic outlines were developed, Statistics Finland made an inquiry to the media about what the media thought about the communication services produced by Statistics

Finland. In addition to the electronic inquiry, a few editors were interviewed in-depth. In my presentation, I describe briefly the results of this survey.

One issue strongly raised in the process was the need for developing opinion leadership and lobbying communication. Starting from the end of 2017, Statistics Finland has increased the visibility of its experts by utilising videos in communication. Each month, we make a video of a few statistical releases where an expert talks about the main points in the release. Video communication supports Statistics Finland's core function. Videos do not aim to replace conventional text releases but increase their media coverage. A video arouses interest and leads both new and old audiences to our statistical data.