



Metanoia Institute

Marketing and Communications Strategy 2023-2028

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Overview

The Metanoia Institute stands at a pivotal moment in its history, ready to amplify its voice and strengthen its presence in the field of counselling and psychotherapy training. This marketing and communications strategy aligns with Metanoia's 2023-2028 Institutional Strategy, focused branding and positioning, digital marketing, partnerships and collaborations, and measurement and evaluation to support recruitment, attract a diverse and talented pool of students and staff, bolster our reputation in the psychotherapy community, and lay a sustainable foundation for future growth.

Strategic Priorities (2023-2028)

This section outlines the strategic objectives for a marketing and communications team, aligned with Metanoia's four strategic priorities for 2023-2028: Inclusion, Innovation, Intelligence, and Sustainability.

- **Inclusion:** Develop marketing and communications practices that enable Metanoia to attract students and staff from **diverse** backgrounds.
- **Innovation:** Adopt innovative marketing approaches, modernise Metanoia's brand and message, and position the organisation as a pioneering and **modern/progressive** training institution.
- **Intelligence:** Harness the power of data analytics and digital marketing technology to fine-tune Metanoia's digital presence and user experience. Employ advanced analytical tools to gain deep insights into audience behaviours and preferences while employing horizon scanning to foresee and adapt to emerging trends, thereby increasing our operational readiness and agility.
- **Sustainability:** Develop and train a Marketing/Recruitment team that is skilled, digital-first, and works cross-departmentally. Embed sustainable development principles to ensure that all marketing activities are financially responsible and contribute to the Institute's growth and income generation.

Strategic Aims

Inclusion

1. **Inclusion:** Develop marketing and communications practices that enable Metanoia to attract students and staff from diverse backgrounds, aligned with Metanoia's People Strategy
 - 1.1. **Outreach:** Embed EDI principles in all marketing and communications campaigns, leveraging both digital and physical outreach to reach marginalised or isolated communities and attract students and staff from diverse backgrounds (including international recruitment).
 - 1.2. **Physical Geo-Targeting:** Strengthen outreach and engagement efforts in key local, regional, and national areas identified through school-based modelling. Develop partnerships with local colleges and Further Education (FE) institutes, community organisations, and industry partners to increase awareness and interest in Metanoia Institute's counselling and psychotherapy programs.
 - 1.3. **Optimise Digital Geo-Targeting:** Implement and refine digital marketing campaigns that target potential students in specific geographic regions. Utilise advanced analytics to tailor digital content and ads to the interests and needs of students from different areas, enhancing the relevance and impact of marketing and communications messages (strategic Aim #3 expands on this).
 - 1.4. **Style Guide:** Develop a Metanoia Style Guide to set a MarComms Team standard and provide guidance to all students and staff on creating Metanoia content that is educational, clear, respectful, accessible and inclusive (see, for example, SCA, 2022; Mailchimp, 2023).
 - 1.5. **Audience Engagement:** Word of mouth is Metanoia's greatest marketing and communications resource. Engage key audiences by tapping into their individual and collective intelligence. Partner with students, alumni, members, and staff to build Metanoia's reputation with EDI principles in mind (seeking balance in racial, ethnic, gender, and sexuality representation).
 - 1.6. **Staff Communications:** Continue to develop our Staff Communications Framework, "Metanoia Connected"—our new staff intranet, newsletter, and monthly staff meetings—as a key feature of all evolving strategies, delivering relevant and targeted information to foster engagement and collaborative communication.
 - 1.7. **Student Communications:** Students at Metanoia often report being overwhelmed by the amount, number of sources, and style of communications at Metanoia. Develop a Student Communications Framework and adopt the new "Student Hub"—a student intranet and newsletter—as the single digital community and communications hub for students. Appoint a Student Engagement Manager to adopt the framework and manage student communications centrally.
 - 1.8. **External Communications:** Develop and disseminate in-person lecture series and associated audio, video, and written content that positions Metanoia as a platform where people in the psychological professions can share and debate

ideas that move our field forward. This includes our “Meaningful Conversations” series and other CPD offerings.

Innovation

2. **Innovation:** Adopt innovative marketing and communications approaches, modernising Metanoia’s brand and message whilst positioning the organisation as a pioneering and **modern/ progressive** training institution.
 - 2.1. **Innovative Marketing and Communications Approaches:** Implement marketing approaches that blend the traditional with the modern, the old-fashioned with the contemporary, and the conventional with the creative. A marketing approach that respects and highlights Metanoia’s unique history as a pioneer while being forward-facing and progressive.
 - 2.2. **Brand Message:** Refine Metanoia's brand message to effectively communicate our Institutional Strategic Aims of inclusion, innovation, intelligence, and sustainability.
 - 2.3. **Value Proposition:** Articulate a compelling value proposition that showcases the unique benefits of our educational offerings, focused graduate employability/outcomes, skill enhancement, and comprehensive student well-being as measures of value (UCAS, 2023).
 - 2.4. **Showcase Unique Programmes:** Implement dedicated marketing campaigns to showcase new and innovative learning programmes unique to Metanoia, e.g. Online and Phone Therapy CPD and NHS-accredited courses.
 - 2.5. **Graduate Success Stories:** Curate a series of impactful narratives from our alumni to demonstrate the tangible career advancements facilitated by Metanoia’s programs.
 - 2.6. **Enhancing the Student Journey:** Publicize the strategic investments made to bolster student support infrastructures, emphasising our commitment to an enriching, supportive, and well-rounded educational journey. This includes showcasing continuous improvements in mentorship, academic resources, and welfare services.
 - 2.7. **Staff Training:** On-brand communication is the responsibility of all Metanoia staff, not only Marcomms staff. Develop ongoing training for all staff who interact with prospective, current, and former students to ensure that this messaging consistently permeates all forms of communication, reinforcing our strategic intentions and meeting regulatory requirements and consumer legislation (e.g., Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) guidance).
 - 2.8. **Physical Space:** We may aim to be digital-first but the physical training environment matters. Work with the Operations team to develop a budget and strategy to modernise the physical learning environment.

Intelligence

3. **Intelligence:** Harness the power of data analytics and digital marketing and communications technology to fine-tune Metanoia's digital presence and user

experience. Employ advanced analytical tools to gain deep insights into audience behaviours and preferences while employing horizon scanning to foresee and adapt to emerging trends, thereby increasing our operational readiness and agility.

- 3.1. **CRM Integration:** Fully integrate a comprehensive Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system to track and enhance interactions with all stakeholders, supporting tailored communications and relationship building. Enhance and personalise the applicant > student > alumni digital experience to remove complexity and reduce friction.
- 3.2. **Customer Service Principles:** Enhance the student and stakeholder engagement experience by developing comprehensive Customer Service Principles that reflect the Institute's values and educational ethos. This will be achieved by implementing a robust support framework that provides timely, empathetic, and effective assistance throughout the student lifecycle—from initial inquiry to alumni relations.
- 3.3. **Multi-Channel Promotion:** Use a mix of advertising, public relations, events, and digital marketing and communications to raise awareness and attract students and staff. Offer immersive in-person and virtual campus tours and events and actively participate in HE and industry events to promote our presence and programmes.
- 3.4. **Website and Data Analytics:** Develop and launch a new website to improve user experience and Search Engine Optimisation (SEO) to enhance visibility and attract traffic. SEO is the practice of enhancing website content and structure to improve visibility and ranking in search engine results pages, aiming to attract more organic traffic. Use modern digital tools to monitor website traffic and increase the effectiveness of advertising campaigns (Feathr, Google Analytics, Google Ads).
- 3.5. **First-Party Data Sets:** Implement cutting-edge marketing automation technologies to gather insights on user behaviour and develop first-party data sets to connect directly with our stakeholders online. Prioritise channels that support the growth of robust first-party data, enhancing our marketing capabilities. First-party data refers to the information that a company collects directly from its customers and audiences through its own channels, such as website visits, surveys, and customer interactions, which is used to personalise marketing and communications efforts and enhance customer experiences.
- 3.6. **Increase Conversion Rates through Personalised Marketing:** Use geographical and demographic data insights to create personalised marketing materials that resonate with targeted demographics. Focus on converting interest into applications by highlighting program strengths, alumni success, and specific benefits for students from targeted regions.
- 3.7. **In-Depth Audience Analysis:** Commit to ongoing, sophisticated analysis of target demographics using market research and social listening to refine our messaging and align with the evolving needs of future therapists.
- 3.8. **Strategic Social Media Presence:** Develop a tailored social media strategy with a focus on platforms that align with our target audiences, primarily LinkedIn and Instagram, fostering engagement and community. Appoint a Social and

Digital Media Manager to create in-house audio/video/graphic/written content across our platforms and engage our audiences online. Create and foster a two-way conversation with our audiences online.

- 3.9. **Thought Leadership through Content Marketing:** Craft and disseminate high-quality, informative content that asserts Metanoia's position as a thought leader, while addressing key audience interests and industry issues, particularly in areas of equity, diversity, and inclusion within the profession. Create a content calendar and identify Metanoia's key topics, subject matter experts, and channels for dissemination. Promote Metanoia's research outputs.

Sustainability

4. **Sustainability:** Embed sustainable development principles to ensure that all marketing and communications activities enhance our brand and reputation, promote achievements, are also financially responsible, and contribute to the Institute's growth and income generation.
 - 4.1. **People:** Develop a Marketing and Communications team to help drive our strategy, in line with Metanoia's People Strategy. Work cross-departmentally to create plans to develop Metanoia's recruitment and marketing teams that can grow sustainably with the organisation.
 - 4.2. **Competitive Pricing Analysis:** Conduct comprehensive market analyses to ensure our pricing strategies are competitive and reflect the true value of Metanoia's programs, enhancing accessibility while maintaining financial sustainability.
 - 4.3. **Clarified Product Offerings:** Simplify and differentiate Metanoia's educational and training programs. Address the 'paradox of choice' by streamlining our offerings to highlight the unique value and selling points of training at Metanoia and of each course, emphasising quality, adaptability, and career readiness.
 - 4.4. **Student Survey and Feedback Strategy:** Establish an annual feedback system that encourages input from students, staff, and partners to refine and enhance our marketing and communications and operational strategies, embedding existing surveys like the National Student Survey (NSS).
 - 4.5. **Objective Insights:** Commit to continuous in-depth analysis of our prospective student demographic through data-driven strategies, including market research, social listening, and analytics. Utilise these insights to adapt and position our branding to meet the evolving expectations of the next generation of therapists.

References

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