

Report No:	RFN12-08-01
File No:	C797
Date:	23 August 2012
Information Only – no decision required	

REPORT SUMMARY

Report to: Communications Subcommittee
Meeting Date: 23 August 2012
Subject: Communications Advisor's report
Report Author: Chris Choat – Communications Advisor

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The middle two months of the year has been relatively quiet for external communications. The focus has been on rationalising the distribution and production of printed materials as well as focusing on utilising other channels such as radio, as suggested by feedback driven by events earlier in the year.

The period has also seen the steady but increasing growth in use and acceptance of the Council's online channels.

RECOMMENDATION/S

That the report be received.

DRAFT RESOLUTION

THAT the Communications Subcommittee receives the Communications Advisor's report RFN12-08-01.

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1. Activity Report

- 1.1 April/May saw considerable activity around the Long Term Plan process and a redesign of Newsline, Boredom Busters and Mudcakes & Roses. June/July has been a settling in period for these publications, with anecdotal feedback being positive on the whole. June/July's communications activity has been at a 'business as usual' level with no significant projects dominating our time.
- 1.2 The gradual reformatting of Council's internal documents, as well as the Tasman Resource Management Plan public guides, has continued thus bringing the vast majority of internal and external documents in-line with the Council's brand guidelines and ensuring that all documents produced by the Council are recorded and categorised in a consistent fashion.
- 1.3 Five issues of Newsline were published during June/July and the new eight-page format is proving to be suitable. There is the option to go to 12 ages if required but this will only be used in exceptional circumstances.
- 1.4 One issue of Mudcakes & Roses was also produced during this period with a reduced page count (now 20). The big change to Mudcakes & Roses though is that the Council has now stopped mailing copies to residents who had previously requested that service. This change was well communicated and approximately 50 individuals have chosen to continue receiving their copy through the post at their own cost (\$15 per year). It is presumed that the other 1500+ are now collecting their copies from the usual outlets or reading online.

This change is being monitored to ensure that the publication is still reaching its intended audience and serving its purpose.
- 1.5 We are moving into the Council's busiest communications period with a number of key events requiring publicity and most departments looking to have their public documents updated in time for the Christmas break.

2. Community Engagement

- 2.1 Since the start of July the community engagement project has been focused on gathering and assessing information and identifying current practise and tools within the field of community engagement. The search, while widespread, initially has identified a number of useful sources closer to home particularly in New Zealand and Australia. A sweep of the requirements to consult within legislation relevant to local government has yielded a number of requirements that we need to include in Council's policy.
- 2.2 While there is a clear recognition that consultation is not engagement, it is one of the tools which can, and has, often lead to confusion as to whether or not engagement is occurring.
- 2.3 Over the next few weeks the project will report to the sponsors and management team as to the findings and will be looking to workshop the definition of engagement that will specifically take account of Tasman's communities.
- 2.3 From these workshops a number of expectations will be clarified. Once these have been established the identification and construction of appropriate processes and tools will be begun.
- 2.4 In discussing and researching the field of community engagement it is apparent the tools and processes are without purpose if a clear philosophy has not been embedded and supported within the organisation.

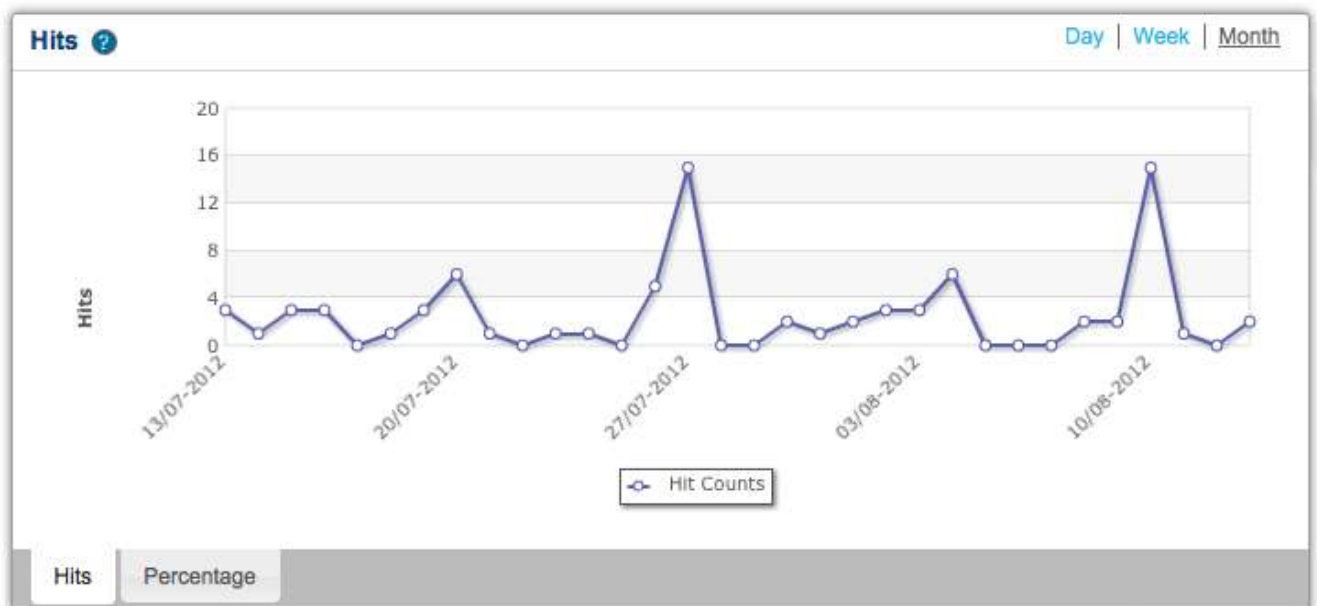
3. Media Activity

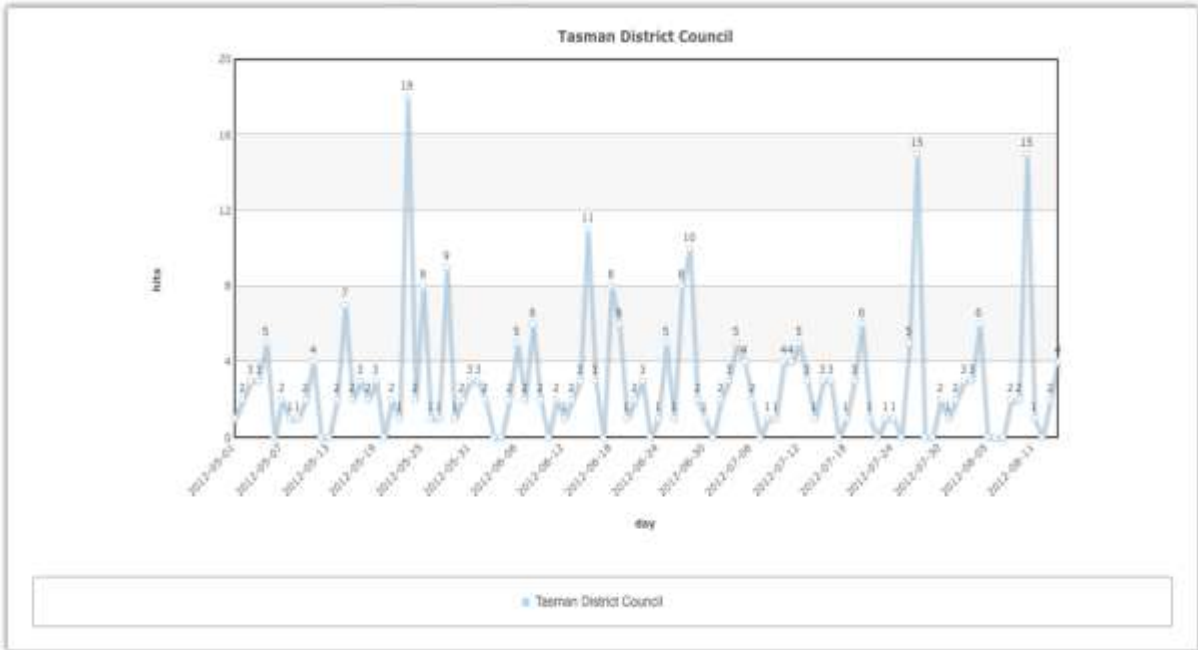
- 3.1 Media releases sent out during July 2012 were:
- Commercial Subcommittee Closer in Tasman
 - Top of the South Agreement Supported by Tasman
 - Development Contributions To Be Reviewed
 - Tasman District Representation Model Confirmed by Council
 - State Highway 65 Now Open - Shenandoah
 - Half a Metre of Rain Falls Over the Weekend
 - Tasman District Council to Purchase Dominion Flats Land
 - Council to Discuss Development Contributions with the District

Media releases sent out during June 2012 were:

- Abel Tasman Foreshore Management Plan Approved
- Tasman’s Long Term Plan Adopted
- Development Contribution Costs Decrease in Tasman
- Iconic Tourist Road to Re-open
- Motueka Valley Highway Slip
- Roothing Update 1930 hours: Motueka Valley Highway Now Open
- Tasman Retains Tourism Funding
- Storm Update 4 - Final
- Navigational Safety Warning - Mapua
- Storm Update 2
- Storm Update 3
- Navigation Safety Warning - Coastal Waters
- Metservice Heavy Rain Warning Issued

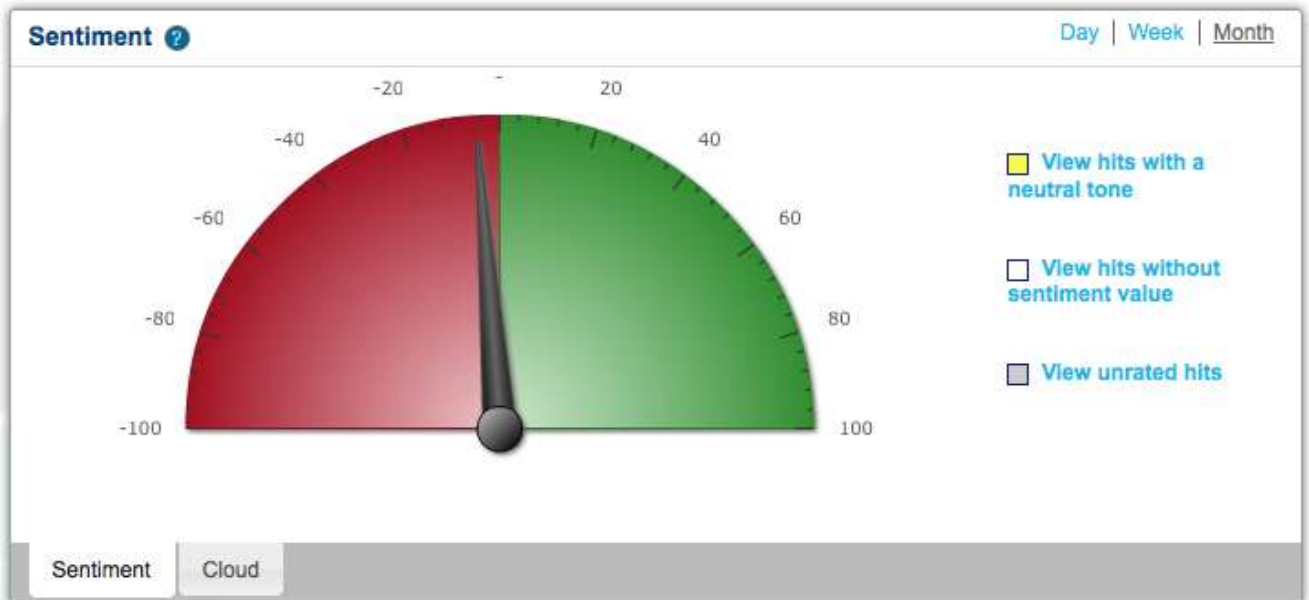
3.2 Over the last month the phrase ‘Tasman District Council’ has been mentioned 82 times, across 13 media outlets (previous month 99 mentions over 21 media outlets). The spike on the 27 July was related to a number of unrelated news stories hitting the media at the same time (cycle trail bridge opening, rates rebates, lights on Queen Street, Top of the South accord, Rates Remission policy), as was the last spike on the 10 August.





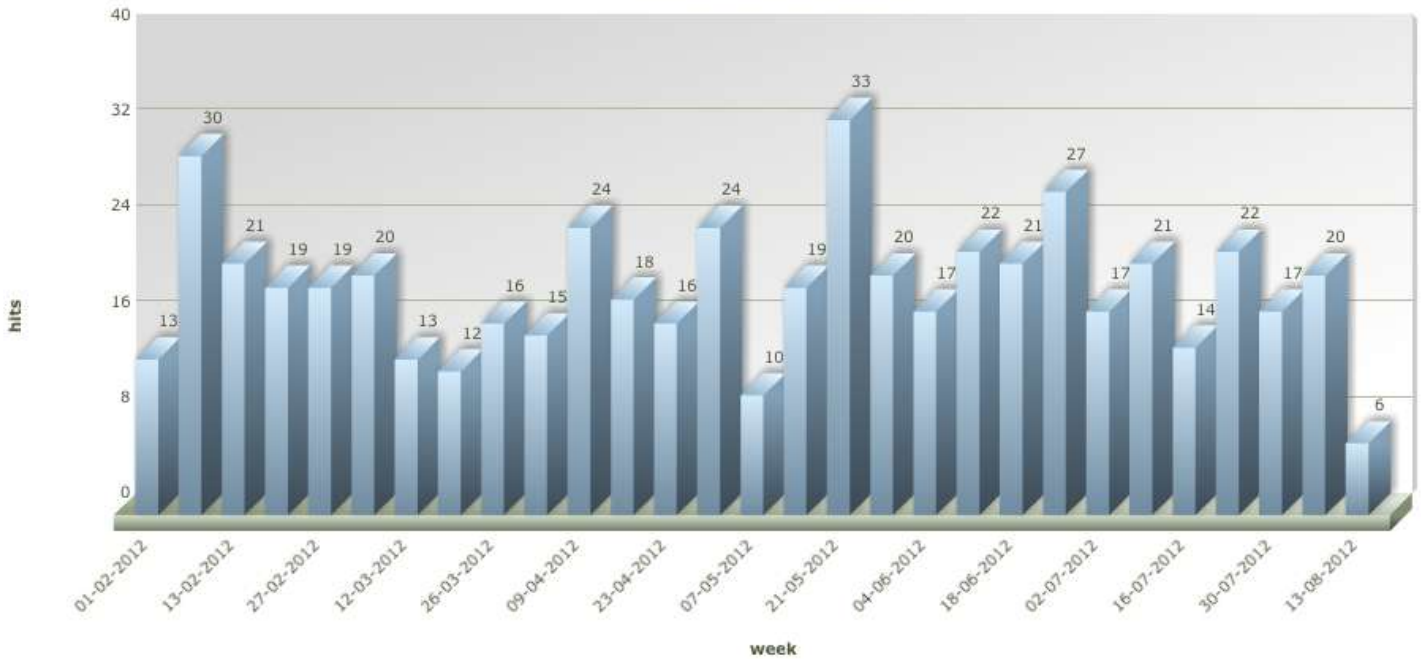
The graph above shows a breakdown of 'hits per day' over the last three months (to 14 August 2012).

The 'sentiment' of those 88 mentions is measured as being neutral (on average)



Below is a breakdown of the number of times the phrase ‘Tasman District Council’ has been mentioned in the media over the past six months. As you can see it has been tracking relatively consistently with small weekly spikes related to short-lived topics of interest. The LTP process has generated the greatest level of media interest over this period.

Tasman District Council



5. RECOMMENDATION/S

That the report be received.

6. DRAFT RESOLUTION

THAT the Communications Subcommittee receives the Communications Advisor’s report RFN12-08-01.