

# Introduction

This handbook consists of guidelines, reference materials, and supporting documentation to serve as a general guide to the strategy, design, and development of sustainability reporting materials. Throughout the Handbook, we reference a hypothetical company, "ACME" to help better illustrate and demonstrate some of the tools and materials.

Rigorous adherence to these guidelines will improve all phases of the project and create a more cohesive, efficient, and effective drafting process. Ultimately, an improved development process will result in a more robust, comprehensive, and useful suite of reports.

## The Handbook focuses on several attributes of the ACME Reporting Project. They include:

- ... The connection to ACME's corporate citizenship
- ... Overview of the reporting materials suite
- ... Project phases
- ... Report Teams, and their roles and responsibilities
- ... Project processes and schedule

This handbook is a working document and is intended to evolve as needed.

Please note - In correlation to this handbook, we offer a free webinar, in which we walk-through and explain each of the preceding sections in greater detail. Furthermore, we also offer customized 1:1 training sessions and workshops for individuals and teams. Please contact us if you're looking to gain a deeper understanding of the handbook and effectively embed it into your organization.

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# **ACME Reporting:** An Overview

ACME's Reporting consists of a suite of materials that reflects our commitment to global citizenship. These materials can include a website, video, downloadable PDF, executive summary, global citizenship report, and more. Collectively, the materials aim to communicate ACME's annual impact across our strategic initiatives and what's on the horizon. ACME's suite of materials consist of four pieces:

- ... The Annual Performance Summary and Proxy Statement are primarily intended for investors. Both documents begin with a letter from the Chairman. The Annual Performance Summary includes key facts, updates on the strategic initiatives, financial highlights, a listing and photo of the senior leadership team, and the Form 10-K. The Proxy Statement includes a notice of the Annual Meeting, a summary of policy updates, and a snapshot of key performance metrics.
- ... The Company Overview brochure is a high-level overview of the Company and our key impacts related to our strategic initiatives. This piece will be used by all internal and external audiences and will also be provided in a PowerPoint format for presentations.
- ... The 2018 Global Citizenship Report documents ACME's environmental, social, and economic impacts, based on the chosen reporting framework(s). Possible frameworks include GRI, SASB, IR. The main audience is non-governmental organizations (NGOs), but it will also be used as a reference document for internal and external stakeholders.
- ... The **Company Fact Sheet** will highlight key facts about the Company and summarize ACME progress toward our future goals. The audience for this is all internal and external stakeholders.

These reports enable us to share our ACME story and progress with a broad range of stakeholders, including employees, customers, suppliers, shareholders, communities, governments, and NGOs. These materials support our...

- ... Vision:
- ... Mission:
- ... Purpose:

# **Defining the ACME Reporting Effort**

### The ACME Reports are:

- ... A reflection of ACME global citizenship efforts and progress, over the previous year's reporting period, toward achieving our vision.
- ... An industry-aligned reporting tool that presents our fiscal performance, community engagement and philanthropy, as well as our environmental impact over a defined time-period.
- ... A set of reference documents for all audiences interested in the full scope of ACME.
- ... A commitment to transparency that our stakeholders expect.

### The ACME Reports are not:

... Our only tools for communicating ACME global citizenship story internally or externally.

### **Audience Overview**

When used in conjunction with one another, or as standalone pieces, our suite of reporting materials target a variety of stakeholders and audiences. We worked with our Strategic Communications Partner to specify and prioritize our audiences.

### Typical audiences include, but are not limited to:

- ... Communities
- ... Customers
- ... Employees
- ... Shareholders
- ... Governments
- ... NGOs
- ... Suppliers
- ... Media

# **Defining Success**

The ACME Reports have several objectives and each warrant the development of metrics to completely and accurately measure its impact on the many different audiences that are served. The Strategy team will define these metrics.

### **ACME Project goals:**

At the onset of the project, we'll set SMART goals tied directly to the production and process of the reporting project. Examples may be:

- ... Better define, articulate, and outline each teams' role and responsibilities for the project.
- ... Reduce the number of all-team meetings by switching from weekly to monthly check-ins.
- ... Increase the level of accountability for each separate team throughout each key project date(s).
- ... Aim to streamline the reporting process by condensing the schedule and come under budget to reduce costs by 2%.

### **ACME** overall reporting goals:

While the project goals help define success for the reporting process, overall goals detailing the outputs of the project are also necessary to define. At a high level, we hope that the ACME Reporting:

- ... Clearly, accurately, and completely reflects ACME's efforts in environmental, social, and economic using the selected reporting framework.
- ... Increase readership and engagement of reporting materials by 20%.
- ... Clearly and easily demonstrate ACME's global citizenship work as an enterprise-wide business strategy.
- ... Develop a suite of materials that are relevant and beneficial to a diverse set of audiences and applications.
- ... Fully outline ACME's progress toward achieving our vision and fulfilling our mission.

# **ACME Reporting:** Project Phases

The ACME Reporting effort consists of six phases. Each phase consists of multiple focus areas. The phases and their activities are listed below.

Figure 1: ACME Reporting Project Phases and Activities

Discovery	<ul> <li>Define success metrics and goals</li> <li>Define teams, roles and responsibilities</li> <li>Stakeholder engagement</li> <li>Benchmark and competitive analysis</li> <li>Evaluate strategic initiatives</li> </ul>
Define	<ul> <li>Define processes and project timelines</li> <li>Define report scope and boundary</li> <li>Content outline and storylines</li> <li>Creative brief</li> <li>Communications plan</li> </ul>
Develop	<ul> <li> Data/content gathering</li> <li> Copywriting</li> <li> Design</li> <li> Video</li> <li> Photography</li> <li> Web development</li> </ul>
Refine	<ul><li>Review</li><li>Revise</li><li>Resubmit</li><li>Approve</li></ul>
Publish	<ul> <li>Preparation for and publication of the ACME Reporting materials.</li> <li>This may include:         <ul> <li>Content entry and website launch</li> <li>Preparation of files, printer coordination/verification, publication, and distribution of reports</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Communicate	<ul> <li>Promotion of the ACME Reporting materials. This may include:</li> <li>Social media and email campaigns</li> <li>Presentations</li> <li>Webinars</li> </ul>

# **ACME Reporting Teams:**

# An Overview

# **Report Teams**

Multiple teams contribute to the ACME Reporting effort. Each team has a specific purpose and set of members, but their collective objective is to develop a cohesive presentation of ACME's progress towards its strategic initiatives.

Teams are designed so that members can stay focused on their specific tasks and duties in a project. Typically they are organized by function — and while each team is focused on a single effort or component of the project, they should not work in silos.

It's important though to think through each team's makeup early on, and find the right balance between the team groupings themselves, as well as the members on each. It's best to avoid creating too many teams or having too many people on, or across, each team.

There may be instances where members sit on multiple teams, and that's ok. In these cases however, it's important to evaluate the purpose of that person's involvement on each team and determine whether or not they really need to be involved, or if they can be removed from one or more teams. If one person is on too many teams it can create confusion, frustration, double-work, and burnout.

Typical project teams and their purpose and project involvement can be found in Table 1 on the corresponding pages.

**Table 1:** ACME Reporting Teams and Purpose

TEAM NAME	PURPOSE
Project Lead	The Project Lead is the single person on the ACME team that has oversight of the entire project.  In conjunction with the Strategic Communications Partner, they advise, support, and guide the various teams throughout the course of the project.  Manages (and executes), process, timelines, and team coordinations/ communication, and logistics. May bring in an assistant to help manage some of these efforts.
Strategy Team	Provides guidance on the approach to the ACME Reporting effort and ensures alignment with the overall global citizenship strategy.  Defines the ACME Reporting effort's key information including the reporting framework(s), success metrics, strategic initiatives and overall communications strategy.
Editorial Team	Subject matter experts (SME) identify key themes, storylines and contacts for their respective section of a report.  Ensures all content aligns with the reporting strategy (what is talked about and why it is important). Reviews and edits content as subject matter experts.
Content & Data Gathering/ Validation Team	Gathers, organizes, formats, and validates all data and information for use in the ACME Reporting materials, and maintains the data repository.
Creative Team	Ensures that the ACME Reporting materials are in alignment with the ACME brand look/feel, adhere to required brand guidelines, printed copies meet quality standards expected by our stakeholders and are distributed to the appropriate groups on time.
Strategic Communications Partner	In conjunction with the Project Lead, they advise, support, and guide the various teams throughout the course of the project.  Advises the ACME Project Team(s) on reporting framework(s), success metrics, content, creative and sustainability strategy.  Manages (and executes), process, timelines, team coordinations/comms the graphic design, copywriting, and a communications plan for the ACME Reports.

# **How the Teams Work Together**

To better understand how the Report Teams work together, and at what stages of the project teams are pulled, in please refer to Figures 2 and 3.

Figure 2: ACME Reporting Team Org Structure

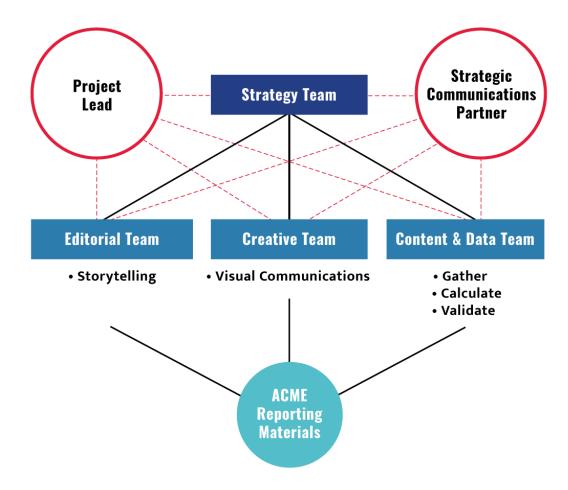
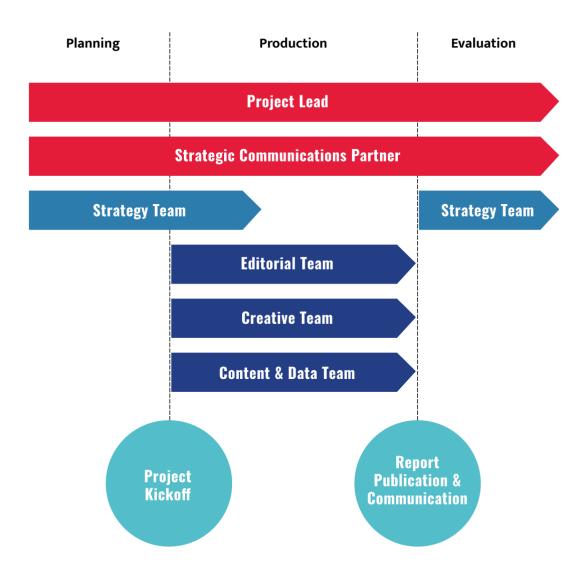


Figure 3: ACME Reporting Process Flow



### **RASCI** Model

We utilize the **RASCI** model to help categorize stakeholders on each team and define their roles and responsibilities for a given task or set of tasks. The RASCI helps clarify the relationships between tasks and people on a project. It helps to set expectations for each member on the team, to ensure everyone is on the same page.

In addition to identifying roles and responsibilities, the RASCI is also useful for communications planning because it can give you a better idea of which stakeholders need which type of communication, and at what points in the project they are pulled into meetings or other conversations. Typically:

- ... 'R's, 'A's and 'S's are in every meeting and at the center of team communications.
- ... 'C's are pulled into meetings and communications on an as needed basis where it makes sense, typically at stages where we need their input before the team can continue.
- ... 'I's are never in meetings, instead they are updated via email with regular status notes.

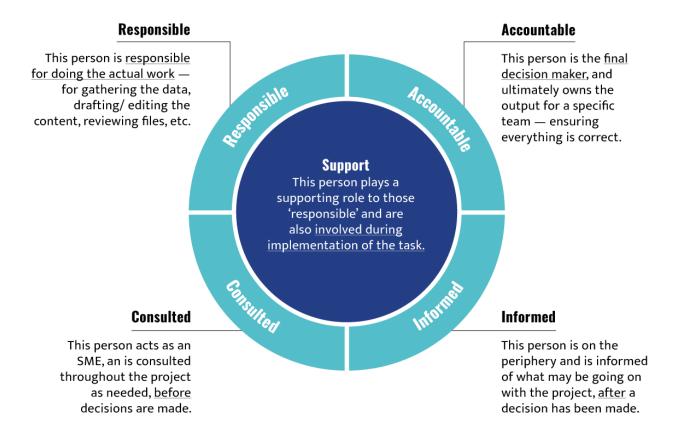
### Problems faced when not using a RASCI:

When you don't document who is responsible for what, you risk:

- ... Decisions taking longer because no one is clear on who has the final say.
- ... Blame when things go wrong.
- ... An overworked team because you haven't balanced the work appropriately.
- ... Inactivity: when people aren't sure if they should do something they typically do nothing.

Figure 4 below outlines the definitions of each category of the RASCI model.

Figure 4: RASCI Model



Another way to view the RASCI matrix is as a triangle. In this version, you can easily see how responsibilities are distributed across a team, including areas where there is a single member identified or where there may be multiples.

There is only one person accountable for the task or project, and they are at the top. You then have several people responsible for various elements. A larger group is consulted and provides input. An even larger group gets regular communications, but are not active in any other way.

Figure 5: RASCI Triangle



### A successful RASCI matrix:

- ... Always has one Accountable person on the team. This person acts as the final decision maker for their respective areas of responsibility. The Accountable person is responsible for the entire team's output, to ensure work gets completed on time and meets ACME Reporting standards. They are the single decision maker.
- ... Always has at least one Responsible person on the team. There can be multiple people assigned as responsible for various parts of a single team effort, but they cannot be responsible for the exact same work.
- ... Has just one category assigned to a given person on each team. The exception to this is that sometimes the Accountable person may also be the Responsible person, who is responsible for completing the task.
- ... Is kept up-to-date and informed as people change roles and move into different positions or responsibilities during a project.
- ... While you don't necessarily need to have people being Support, Consulted and Informed on every team, if you have a lot of gaps it could be a sign that you've missed some stakeholders and you need to reevaluate your matrix.

### Always check your matrix:

Once your matrix is complete, spend a few minutes double-checking what you've done. As you review:

- ... Compare the matrices across all teams and keep an eye out for people that appear on multiples – they may have too much work allocated to them.
  - For example: is someone marked as Accountable or Responsible on every team they are a part of? If so, check their work balance and see if their responsibilities can be moved around and reallocated to keep them focused on the tasks that are most important.
- ... Check that those people you've marked as Accountable actually have the authority to sign off on the task in question.
- ... Look for teams that have a lot of 'R's. That may indicate that there are too many people involved and the work may not get done on time.Look for teams that have a lot of 'C's. If a team has too many people being consulted, it will slow the work down.

# **ACME Reporting Teams:**

# Roles & Responsibilities

### This section outlines:

- ... Team purpose, involvement and responsibilities
- ... Team membership
- ... Team roles

# **Project Lead**

### **Purpose:**

The Project Lead is the single person on the ACME team that has oversight of the entire project.

In conjunction with the Strategic Communications Partner, they advise, support, and guide the various teams throughout the course of the project.

### **Phase Involvement:**

- ... Discovery
- ... Define
- ... Develop
- ... Refine
- ... Publish
- ... Communicate

- ... Manage (and execute), project process, timelines, team coordination, communication, and logistics
- ... May bring in an assistant to help manage some of these efforts

# **Strategy Team**

### **Purpose:**

Provides guidance on the approach to the ACME Reporting materials and ensures alignment with the overall global citizenship strategy. Defines the ACME Reporting material's key information including the reporting framework(s), strategic initiatives, indicators, and the overall communications strategy.

### **Phase Involvement:**

- ... Discovery
- ... Define

- ... Confirm chosen reporting framework(s)
- ... Identify strategic initiatives
- ... Define report scope and boundary
- ... Define stakeholder engagement processes
- ... Set high-level communications strategy
- ... Determine theme and high-level outline
- ... Communicate to Editorial, Data and Creative Teams what will be reported on and why we are reporting on these topics

**Table 2:** Strategy Team

Company	Name	Title	Section	RASCI
ACME Company	Person A	VP	Overall	Accountable
	Person B	CSR Director	Social, Environmental, Economic	Responsible
	Person C	Director of Corp Comms	Corporate Communications	Consulted
	Person D	Creative Director	Branding	Informed
	Person E	Project Lead	Overall	Support
Strategic Communications Partner	Person A	Account Manager	Overall	Support
	Person B	Account Strategist	Overall	Responsible
	Person C	Sustainability SME	Overall	Consulted
	Person D	Creative Director	Overall	Informed

# **Editorial Team**

### **Purpose:**

Subject matter experts (SME) identify key themes, storylines and contacts for their respective section of a report.

Ensures all content aligns with the reporting strategy (what is talked about and why it is important). Reviews and edits content as subject matter experts.

### **Phase Involvement:**

- ... Define
- ... Develop
- ... Refine
- ... Publish

- ... Develop the content outline and identify key themes, storylines and contacts
- ... Ensure stories are aligned with strategic initiatives identified by the Strategy team
- ... Strike the appropriate balance of content coming from each section of the report
- ... Present stories that are authentic and credible, and that demonstrate ACME's commitment to continuous improvement without sugar coating or greenwashing
- ... Review, revise, verify and approve all content

**Table 3:** Editorial Team

Company	Name	Title	Section	RASCI
ACME Company	Person A	CSR Director	Overall	Accountable
	Person B	Sustainability Manager	Environment	Responsible
	Person C	Sustainability Manager	Social	Responsible
	Person D	Sustainability Manager	Economic	Responsible
	Person E	Director of Corporate Communications	Executive Liaison	Consulted
	Person F	Legal	Overall	Informed
	Person G	Project Lead	Overall	Support
Strategic Communications Partner	Person A	Account Manager	Overall	Support
	Person B	Account Strategist	Overall	Consulted
	Person C	Content Strategist & Copywriter	Overall	Responsible
	Person D	Sustainability SME	Overall	Consulted

# **Content & Data Gathering/Validation Team**

### **Purpose:**

Gathers, organizes, formats, and validates all data and information for use in the ACME Reporting materials, and maintains the data repository.

### **Phase Involvement:**

- ... Develop
- ... Refine

### **Responsibilities:**

- ... Gather/verify all content and data for the ACME Reporting materials
- ... Develop and maintain the content and data repositories
- ... Translate and format data from the repository to the story narrative, and ensure that values align across the appropriate stories and chosen reporting framework
- ... Ensure all data and information is consistently formatted, complete, approved and valid
- ... Approve content and data with legal and any other appropriate parties

### **Notes:**

- ... This team may choose to use any data repository tool to maintain the integrity of the data collected
- ... The Strategic Communications Partner will provide guidance for the type of information the Data Gathering/Validation Team should report on for each indicator of the chosen reporting framework. Additionally, they can create an outline of approved indicators after the Define phase is complete to aid in the collection and organization of the data, if needed

**Table 4:** Content & Data Gathering/Validation Team

Company	Name	Title	Section	RASCI
ACME Company	Person A	Data Management Director	Overall	Accountable
	Person B	Data Specialist	Social	Responsible
	Person C	Data Specialist	Economic	Responsible
	Person D	Data Specialist	Environment	Responsible
	Person E	Sustainability Manager	Social	Consulted
	Person F	Sustainability Manager	Economic	Consulted
	Person G	Sustainability Manager	Environment	Consulted
	Person H	Project Lead	Overall	Support
Strategic Communications Partner	Person A	Account Manager	Overall	Support
	Person B	Content Strategist & Copywriter	Overall	Consulted
	Person C	Sustainability SME	Overall	Consulted

# **Creative Team**

### **Purpose:**

Ensures that the ACME Reporting materials are in alignment with the ACME brand look/feel, adhere to required brand guidelines, printed copies meet quality standards expected by our stakeholders and are distributed to the appropriate groups on time.

### **Phase Involvement:**

- ... Define
- ... Develop
- ... Refine
- ... Publish
- ... Communicate

- ... Help define and review the creative strategy and recommended deliverable outputs
- ... Review designs for branding accuracy
- ... Work with printers to get collateral printed
- ... Maintain updated photo and video repository
- ... Oversee distribution of printed materials

**Table 5:** Creative Team

Company	Name	Title	Section	RASCI
ACME Company	Person A	Creative Director	Overall	Accountable
	Person B	Manager	Printing & Distribution	Responsible
	Person C	Manager	Video	Responsible
	Person D	Manager	Design (Printed Materials & Website)	Responsible
	Person E	Project Lead	Overall	Support
Strategic Communications Partner	Person A	Account Manager	Overall	Support
	Person B	Creative Director	Overall	Consulted
	Person C	Design Lead	Design (Printed Materials & Website)	Responsible
	Person D	Content Strategist & Copywriter	Video (script)	Responsible
	Person E	Account Strategist	Overall	Informed

# **Strategic Communications Partner Team**

### **Purpose:**

In conjunction with the Project Lead, they advise, support, and guide the various teams throughout the course of the project.

### **Phase Involvement:**

- ... Discovery
- ... Define
- ... Develop
- ... Refine
- ... Publish
- ... Communicate

- ... Advise the ACME Project Team(s) on reporting framework(s), success metrics, content, creative and sustainability strategy.
- ... Manage (and execute) the graphic design, copywriting, and a communications plan for the ACME Reports.

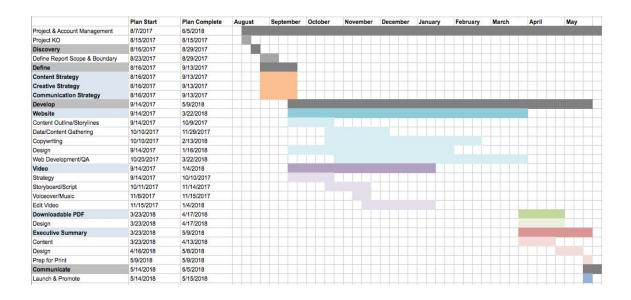
**Table 6:** Strategic Communications Partner Team

Name	Title	Responsibilities	Phase Involvement
Person A	Account Manager	Acts as day-to-day project lead, and as the bridge between the ACME and Partner teams.  Monitors project schedules, budgets, and deliverables.	All Phases
Person B	Account Strategist	Provides day-to-day strategic support and direction.  Reviews all project deliverables to ensure consistency with overall project and account strategic initiatives.	All Phases
Person C	Content Strategist & Copywriter	Strategizes, writes and edits compelling stories that exemplify ACME global citizenship efforts.	Define, Develop, & Refine
Person D	Creative Director	Provides high-level support, guidance, and direction for all creative related to the Coordinated Reports.	All Phases
Person E	Sustainability SME	Provides strategic guidance and recommendations on the specific reporting framework standards. Reviews content outline and copywriting to ensure consistency with reporting metrics, and reviews/clarifies needs for GRI, SASB, RI, or whichever reporting framework is chosen.	Discovery, Define, Develop & Refine
Person F	Design Lead	Leads Partner design team in developing the creative execution of all materials and ensures adherence to ACME brand guidelines.	Develop, Refine & Publish

# **ACME Reporting Schedule**

Below is a high-level project timeline that includes phases, activities, and deadlines.

The key project dates and timeline will be revised as necessary.



# **Key Project Dates**

Project KO Meeting

### Discovery

Research and analysis

### Define

- Approved Report scope & boundary
- Approved content outline
- Approved creative brief
- Approved communications plan

### **Develop and Refine**

- Website
- Video
- Downloadable PDF
- **Executive Summary**

### **Publish**

- Report launch
- Print production and distribution

### Communicate

Promote Report and supporting materials

# **Notes**