D7.1: Dissemination, communication and marketing plan

WP7 – Exploitation and Communication

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Executive summary

This report (D7.1) comprises the APOLLO Dissemination, communication and marketing plan, a comprehensive and living document which outlines the actions, tools and channels to be used throughout the project in the promotion of the services under development. The purpose of the document is to outline the strategy, activities, and tools with which the APOLLO project will communicate with a range of external stakeholders, as well as the timing of the various actions throughout the lifetime of the project.

As an Innovation Action, APOLLO needs to move from being a project to a commercial service, and the communication, dissemination and marketing activities must reflect this. The development of a brand identity should begin early, and continuity should be evident in the shift from project-based to commercial activities. It is foreseen that the commercial service will be released under a new name, which better reflects the content and purpose of the services.

All APOLLO project partners have a role to play in WP7, especially the pilot partners in ensuring that effective communication is carried out in their regions. For this reason, local contact points have been nominated in each pilot region for the translation activities and media relations.

The primary target audiences for the APOLLO services are small farmers, farmer’s cooperatives, and agricultural consultants. In addition, research and academic communities, local and regional public authorities as well as the general public and the media are relevant targets for the communication effort. During the early stages of the APOLLO project, the strategic decision was taken not to limit the audience to smallholder farmers only – although these remain the primary target of the action, but to extend the offering to farmers with holdings of other sizes.

The APOLLO project will make use of a suite of tools, channels and activities to achieve its objectives (e.g.: website, newsletter, brochure, leaflet, fact sheets, press kit and social media), underpinned by an integrated and coherent visual identity which forms the basis for a commercial brand. The APOLLO website will initially take the form of a web presence focused on the project, and later, a commercial site will be made available (at a web address corresponding to the new name of the service), timed to coincide with the release of APOLLO’s first working prototype. Further to the core activities associated with the creation of tools and the use of media channels, a set of activities is foreseen in order to amplify and consolidate the communication, marketing and dissemination effort, including promotion of the project by consortium partners, a programme of attendance at events and conferences and the publication of scientific results. A master database of contacts and media channels (including social media) is being established as a resource for the communication, dissemination and marketing-related activities in this work package.

The APOLLO project spans two agricultural seasons, May to September, 2017 and 2018. The communications plan takes into account these periods and is built to maximise the awareness-raising activities in the lead-up to the start of the seasons.

The impact of the APOLLO communication activities will be monitored on an ongoing basis and reported in the relevant deliverables (D7.7-9), using a set of Key Performance Indicators.
1 Introduction

This deliverable document D7.1 comprises the Dissemination, communication and marketing plan of the APOLLO project. The purpose of the document is to outline the strategy, activities, and tools with which the APOLLO project will communicate with a range of external stakeholders, as well as the timing of the various actions throughout the lifetime of the project. This document will be updated throughout the life of the project, with a formal update to be delivered in M24.

Horizon 2020 projects are required to undertake activities which “promote the action and its results, by providing targeted information to multiple audiences (including the media and the public), in a strategic and effective manner and possibly engaging in a two-way exchange” (Article 38 of the Model Grant Agreement). In addition, there is a requirement to disseminate project results; this being “the public disclosure of the results by any appropriate means (other than resulting from protecting or exploiting the results), including by scientific publications in any medium” (European Commission, 2013).

APOLLO is an Innovation Action, and such projects are expected to lead to “new products or services on the market” and “significant turnover for participants and the creation of a significant number of new jobs”. This implies the development of marketing, customer engagement and retention strategies, over and above the awareness-raising activities which would normally take place in other EU-funded projects.

Based on the above requirements, an important distinction is drawn between communicating on the project itself (i.e. the fact that EU-funded initiatives are building new services in the Member States, EU-wide collaboration etc.), disseminating the results of the project, and marketing the APOLLO service to its target audience. APOLLO’s WP7 therefore addresses two primary objectives:

1. **Fostering a sustainable customer base for the future commercial service**;
2. **Communicating the results and benefits of the project to relevant target audiences**.

In order to clearly distinguish between the different communication-related activities linked to the two above objectives, the following definitions will be used for the purposes of the activities to be carried out within WP7:

- **Dissemination** will be taken to refer to the publication or presentation of scientific results arising from, or based upon the activities conducted in the framework of the project;
- **Communication** will refer to the activities through which the project will present itself outside its own community to a wide variety of external stakeholder groups;
- **Marketing**, treated as a special case of the communication effort, is aimed at the target consumers of the APOLLO services and designed specifically to create a convincing case for the APOLLO services’ viability, competitiveness, and added-value with respect to the alternatives available on the market, to engage and retain customers, and thereby ultimately to generate revenue.

**Marketing** addresses Objective 1, namely identifying and engaging with potential future customers of the APOLLO services. **Dissemination** will address the scientific, research and academic community, whereas **communication** focuses on the other audiences - both in support of Objective 2\(^1\). These activities, although inter-related, have different audiences and different aims, which will be highlighted throughout the chapters which follow:

\(^1\) The term “communication will also be used in a general sense to refer to the whole package of activities in WP7.
2 Context

The APOLLO project responds to a series of challenges facing the agricultural sector as a whole, and European smallholder farmers in particular. Global population growth means that by 2050, farmers across the world will need to grow twice as much as they do today in order to feed the planet’s 9 billion inhabitants (WWF, 2012). At the same time, there is less land available for agricultural production, thanks to the expanding population, soil erosion and water scarcity. Finally, there are social and regulatory pressures on farmers to more sustainably manage their natural resources – for example, from the new “greening” rules in the Common Agricultural Policy (European Commission, 2016), and to reduce their environmental impact by using less pesticides, fertiliser, water and fuel. In responding to these challenges, Europe’s agricultural productivity needs to be increased whilst ensuring its sustainability by means of improved resource efficiency.

One promising approach for addressing these challenges is precision agriculture: the practice of optimising the application of agricultural inputs. Detailed information about the state and health of crops allows farmers to apply chemicals and water in the precise quantities required, and only where and when they are needed. Precision agriculture techniques have been commercially available to European farmers for approximately 15 years, and their use has become more widespread in parallel with the increased availability and utilisation of satellite and mapping technologies, including Earth Observation.

There are two kinds of farms in Europe: the vast majority which cultivate a relatively small area, and a small number of farms which cultivate much larger areas. The majority of precision agriculture and agri-information services are targeted at large-scale farming operations, and such services are often adopted in “hot spots”. For the overwhelming majority of smallholder farmers, however, the huge potential of Earth Observation and precision agriculture remains unexploited, due to a combination of high costs, greater risks and lower economies of scale.

It is this niche in the market for an affordable, easy-to-use service targeted towards small farmers and tailored to their needs which the APOLLO project seeks to exploit. It will do so by developing affordable and user-friendly agricultural advisory services which are targeted primarily (although not exclusively) at small farmers, as well as farmers’ associations and agricultural consultants.
3 Strategy

APOLLO will result in a set of commercial agricultural information services. As with the launch of any new product or service onto the market, a strategic approach governing its presentation to the outside world is required. Such an approach relies on a solid understanding of the target audiences and the objectives of the communications aimed at them. Consequently, the approach to communication must be tailored to take advantage of their specificities for maximum effect; selected messages must be delivered using the correct means, and the timing of communication activities should be designed for maximum impact.

Underpinning these concerns is a more fundamental issue concerning the identity of the action. APOLLO needs to move from being a project to a commercial service, and the communication, dissemination and marketing activities should reflect this. The development of a brand identity should begin early, and continuity should be evident in the shift from project-based to commercial activities. It is foreseen that the commercial service will be released under a new name, which better reflects the content and purpose of the services, following the market research activities to be carried out under the exploitation task of WP7. The announcement of this commercial identity will coincide with the establishment of a separate and dedicated commercial online presence, and supported by updates to the published materials. At the same time, the momentum of awareness-raising and brand recognition build up under the APOLLO banner should not be lost. The activities which have already begun within WP7 have taken these considerations into account, and the practical ramifications are discussed in Chapter 6.

A second underlying topic concerns the question of partnerships. This inevitably ties together with the work to be undertaken under the exploitation task of WP7, but should also be examined in the context of its impact on the communication activities. The commercial services of APOLLO could gain a great deal from being offered as part of a partnership with an existing commercial provider of similar or complementary services. The options need to be identified and fully fleshed out before a coherent strategy can be constructed around them, but this issue is considered strategically important for the success of the communication strategy as a whole.

A third major strategic issue is regionalisation. The APOLLO project is geared towards targeting three pilot countries, and promotional and communication materials will be translated in to the three languages (Greek, Serbian and Spanish) by project partners, and customised in each case to highlight the specific benefits to farmers in the respective countries. The pilot partners will have a direct role in acquiring local ‘intelligence’ in order to inform the most effective strategies for communication and marketing.

3.1 Methodology

3.1.1 Approach

Five groups of activities underpin the approach to communication, marketing and dissemination activities, which are linked to basic questions which must be answered in the course of the project. To each of these questions, a dedicated chapter is included in this document. The table below summarises the activities, questions and the associated chapter.

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<th>Questions</th>
<th>Chapter</th>
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<td>Methods</td>
<td>How will we get our messages across? Which tools should be used for which audiences?</td>
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<td>Timing</td>
<td>When should communication actions take place?</td>
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<td>Evaluation</td>
<td>What was the impact of the communication activities?</td>
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Table 1: Activity groups and key questions

The methodological approach to the communication activities considers three cumulative levels of activity, which incrementally increase both the proximity to the audience and the depth of information:

<table>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENLIGHTEN</td>
<td>Answer in detail key questions about the project’s activities, its methodologies, the timing of its milestone and its results.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENGAGE</td>
<td>Involve the audience in the project’s activities, and maintain awareness over the course of the project (and beyond). This could take the form of a simple subscription to the project’s newsletter, interactive but asynchronous means such as questionnaires, or fully-fledged person-to-person interaction such as inviting participation in workshops, focus groups or other project events. From a commercial perspective, engagement entails the development of a customer-supplier relationship, and is usually termed customer retention.</td>
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Table 2: Levels of communication activity

Each communication action will be aimed at reaching one or more of the above levels across the different audiences (identified in Chapter 4), through the tools, channels and activities detailed in Chapter 6.

Dissemination and Communication activities are aimed mainly at Informing and Enlightening the target audiences, whilst Marketing has the end goal of Engaging audiences.

3.1.2 Principles

A set of strategic principles underpinning the dissemination, communication and marketing effort have been identified which cut across and underpin the methodology for the activities in this work package:

- **Focus on the service, not the project.** Since the end-goal of APOLLO is a commercial service, the content of communication activities should increasingly reflect this shift, with a distinct marker placed between project-level communication (e.g. the use of terminology such as work packages, consortium, etc.) and service-level communication. This will most strongly be felt in the **change of name** and the establishment of a **commercial website**;

- **Establish an early brand identity.** APOLLO needs to become widely recognisable as a brand with as much recognition and awareness as possible throughout the three years of the project. For this reason, the visual identity has been designed for continuity between the project phase and the subsequent commercial phase. In other words, even if the name “APOLLO” is changed to better reflect the content of the services, the visual elements will ensure that brand recognition is retained;
**Focus on practical demonstration as a sales tactic.** The concept here is to directly present users with a sample of the APOLLO services (“showing” rather than “telling”), for example, through a service simulator on the website or through screenshots of mocked-up information screens in the brochure, factsheets and leaflets;

**Identify APOLLO champions amongst pilot users and early adopters.** The benefits of the service will be highlighted using quotes and stories from the pilots and early service users, directly demonstrating the value of the service rather than merely making claims about it;

**Leverage multipliers and networks to maximise impacts.** Networks, associations and other groupings offer an opportunity for amplifying communication efforts with relatively little effort, and these “meta-targets” are identified in Chapter 8;

**Highlight the whole chain of private and public economic and environmental benefits.** APOLLO should emphasise the full range of its social, economic and environmental impacts, starting from the farmer (who saves money on water and gains productivity) to the local economy (which benefits from improved competitiveness) to the general public (who benefit from reduced environmental degradation, better use of water resources, etc.).

### 3.2 Team organisation

The APOLLO Communication activities are led by the Communication Manager, Dimitrios Papadakis (EVF). However, all APOLLO project partners have a role to play in WP7 (see also Section 6.7.1). The pilot partners in particular will play a very important role in ensuring that effective communication is carried out in their regions, by (a) translating the communication and marketing materials produced by the WP7 leader (b) tailoring and regionalising the messages to apply to their local context (see also Chapter 5) and (c) serving as a local media contact point, both for outgoing communications and fielding incoming queries from potential customers or interested stakeholders.

For this reason, the following team organisation has been established, identifying local contact points in each pilot region for the translation and media activities:

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<th>Media Relations</th>
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<tr>
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<td>Maria DOLORES UBIDE (AgriSat)</td>
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</table>

*Table 3: Contact points for communication tasks*
4 Target Audiences and Objectives

This chapter answers the question “who are we trying to reach and why?”. The primary target audiences for the APOLLO services are small farmers, farmer’s cooperatives, and agricultural consultants. In addition, research and academic communities, local and regional public authorities as well as the general public and the media are relevant targets for the communication effort. During the early stages of the APOLLO project, the strategic decision was taken not to limit the audience to smallholder farmers only – although these remain the primary target of the action, but to extend the offering to farmers with holdings of other sizes. The targets can be grouped into four categories:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Description</th>
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| Direct and intermediate customers       | • Farmers;  
• Agricultural cooperatives and associations;  
• Agricultural consultants.                                                 |
| Communication nodes and multipliers     | • Networks e.g. EUROGI, NEREUS, ENRD²;  
• Associations e.g. COPA (Committee of Professional Agricultural Organisations), COGECA (General Committee for Agricultural Cooperation in the European Union);  
• EU-level initiatives e.g. EIP-Agr.
| Media                                   | • Specialised (trade) media (Farmer’s Weekly);  
• General-purpose media.                                                        |
| Research and academia                   | • Agricultural universities and research centres.                             |
| Other relevant stakeholders             | • EU-level actors (REA, DG ENTR, DG AGRI);  
• Local and Regional Authorities;  
• General public.                                                               |

Table 4: Target audience categories

Each of these audiences is associated with specific communications, marketing or dissemination objectives, which are summarised in the table below (primary objectives are indicated in bold). Following the levels of activity described in the subchapter on methodology (3.1), the right-most columns indicate whether the audience should be informed (INF), enlightened (ENL) or engaged (ENG).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Audience</th>
<th>Objectives</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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| Farmers (primarily smallholders)              | • Convince of the direct economic benefits of the service;  
• Generate direct customer leads;  
• Generate momentum for lobbying associations for bulk purchases; | ENG      |
| Agricultural Consultants                      | • Convince of the direct economic benefits of the service  
• Connect with the needs of users  
• Generate direct customer leads | ENG      |
| Agricultural Cooperatives                     | • Convince of economic benefits to members  
• Generate potential customer leads through indirect propagation or direct lead through partnerships or joint supply arrangements | ENG      |
| Policy-makers / National, Regional and Local Authorities | • Gain visibility at institutional level;  
• Convince of value for national extension services;  
• Obtain support for relevant policies and measures. | ENL      |

² European Network for Regional Development.
Within the primary target audiences of (small) farmers and agricultural consultants, it is envisaged that two primary user groups will be identified (although this assumption remains to be validated in practice):

- Traditionalist farmers/consultants, wary or critical of innovative technologies, and unwilling to risk costly investment in testing them;
- Technologically-savvy farmers or consultants, fully convinced of the potential of new innovative technologies to improve their professional lives.

The strategy for marketing to these two groups is distinct, and relies on a combination of appropriate techniques; for example, a special effort will be made to identify social media channels for accessing the second group.

Farmers can also be convinced to contact their association, if they are a member of one, to register their interest in the services and lobby for a bulk purchase of subscriptions — resulting in a better price. A “viral” effect could be generated by encouraging farmers to urge other members to do the same, and a facility could be set up for this purpose. In the same vein, a “recommendation discount” might be a further consideration to incentivise peer-to-peer propagation. These considerations naturally depend on the precise structure of the business plan (D7.10), but it would be recommended to establish such incentives early on in order to maximise the impact of the relevant communication activities.

4.1 APOLLO contact database

A master database of contacts and media channels (including social media) is being established as a resource for the communication, dissemination and marketing-related activities in this work package. To this end, a web-based survey (using TypeForm) has been circulated to all partners, as shown in the below image.
5 Narrative and Messages

In responding to the question “what are the main messages to be delivered?”, this chapter lays out a narrative framework for the APOLLO project and identifies the key messages to be conveyed. In order for the messages delivered by the various communication, dissemination and marketing activities to be effective, coherent and mutually reinforcing, a narrative framework is required which binds them together and gives them context.

The challenge is to construct a narrative which overcomes the potential barriers towards adoption, such as a lack of clear or measurable benefits, incompatibility with working habits, reliance on technical know-how, etc. The narrative framework provides a means for creating a cohesive storyline for APOLLO, irrespectively of the media channels, tools or activities used to propagate the messages.

A preliminary, working narrative framework for the APOLLO project is outlined as follows. This will be elaborated as the project proceeds to encompass findings such as those emanating from the user requirements study (WP2) or from the first contact with the pilot users (WP6). Main messages in the second column are indicated in bold.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Narrative element</th>
<th>Key Messages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Context</strong></td>
<td><strong>APOLLO is an EU-funded project aiming to develop information services for small farmers in particular, as well as for farmer’s associations and agricultural consultants.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>European funding is stimulating the development of innovative new services benefitting European farmers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>APOLLO is a European undertaking built on European public investments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Challenge</strong></td>
<td><strong>Farmers - especially smallholders - need to increase productivity whilst remaining competitive and environmentally friendly.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Earth's population is growing rapidly, and there is less land available for agriculture.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Farmers need to keep up with environmental standards and legislation. Smallholder farmers in particular struggle to access expensive, complicated high-tech solutions.

**Solution**

How do APOLLO services come to the rescue?

- APOLLO services help farmers to make better decisions and save time, energy and resources whilst increasing productivity.
- APOLLO services find the best time to till, reducing soil damage and using less energy.
- APOLLO services find the best time to irrigate, saving precious water.
- APOLLO services keep an eye on crop health and alert the farmer to trouble spots.
- APOLLO makes it possible to treat parts of a field differently according to their needs, saving fertiliser and pesticide.
- APOLLO can estimate the size of the harvest and allow the farmers to calculate their income.

**Differentiators**

What makes APOLLO special?

- APOLLO services are affordable, accessible and easy-to-use.
  - Free European Union satellite data and automated processing make APOLLO services affordable.
  - Any time or place, for many crops on multiple devices - APOLLO services are readily accessible.
  - Built for farmers, by farmers: APOLLO is designed with the help of real farmers to make it user-friendly and easy to navigate.

**Impacts**

What effects will APOLLO have?

- APOLLO services will make farmers more productive and competitive, whilst benefitting the environment.
- APOLLO services will open up the precision agriculture market by making information services available to small farmers.
- APOLLO will improve the competitiveness of European farmers.
- APOLLO can help to reduce the environmental impact of agricultural activities.

**Call to action**

What can you (the audience) do?

- If you are a farmer, a representative of a farmers’ association or cooperative, or an agricultural consultant - sign up to become a trial user of APOLLO services.
- If you would like to stay updated about the project and the future commercial service - sign up to our newsletter.

Table 6: Narrative elements and main messages

This framework and the accompanying messages can be flexibly utilised in communication activities (all messages) or in the dissemination of results (chiefly Context and Challenge) and in marketing activities (from Challenge onwards). The trio of characteristics identified as Differentiators (“affordable, accessible and easy to use”), serves as a synthetic, multi-purpose tagline which can be replicated across multiple media and communication tools.

6 Channels, Tools and Activities

The APOLLO project will make use of a suite of tools, channels and activities to achieve its objectives. This chapter answers the questions “how will we get our messages across?” and “which tools should be used for which audiences?”. The table below summarises the tools at the disposal of the project, describes their purpose and indicates to which of the target audiences the tools are primarily aimed (main targets in bold), and which level of activity the tool is designed to achieve.
### Table 7: Communication tools and audiences (main tools in bold)

The sections which follow describe each of the main tools (shown in bold in the table above), after covering the topic of the visual identity, which – whilst not a communication tool in and of itself - provides all the tools with a common aesthetic.
6.1 Visual identity

An integrated and coherent visual identity underpins all communication products and tools and forms the basis for a commercial brand. The visual identity consists of the logo, colour pallet, and any additional visual elements which work together to form a coherent and recognisable whole.

As highlighted in the Strategy chapter, the importance of establishing an early brand identity for APOLLO was a key consideration from the outset of the project. The visual identity for APOLLO was established in M1 and 2 of the project. In so doing, the following elements were taken into account:

- The need to select an appropriate aesthetic for the branding of a future commercial service;
- The need for a sufficient flexibility to allow for a change of the name of the service in the future (M12);
- The competitive environment, namely the styling and visual approaches currently in use by competitors and by other projects.

Across all outputs of the APOLLO project, and accompanying the logo, a text concerning the source of the project’s funding and disclosing the Grant Agreement number will be provided, along with the European flag (as specified in European Commission, 2012).

![European flag](image)

*This project has received funding from the European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 687412.*

*Figure 2: Standard funding source disclosure text and European emblem*

6.1.1 Logo

A comprehensive review of future competitors’ logos and those of other projects was undertaken. Some 50 logos were evaluated as part of this process. A design brief was developed in close coordination with the project coordinator. An iterative design and refinement process led to the creation of three options, of which the final version was selected by vote at the project’s Kick-Off Meeting (KOM). The final version is presented below.

![APOLLO logo](image)

*Figure 3: The APOLLO logo*
The logo is comprised of two components, the icon and the text. The symbolism of the icon is based on two components, the pixelated roots and the leaves growing from them. The roots symbolise the data on which the services are based, and imply that the plant’s developed is “fed” by information. The plant itself represents healthy crops. Based on the clean and crisp look of the selected logo, it was decided not to include subtext as part of the logo itself.

The text “APOLLO” is not entangled with any other visual element of the logo, which leaves flexibility for a future change of name to adopt the same or a similar layout without compromising any brand recognition achieved throughout the project.

6.1.2 Colour pallet

The colours used in the visual identity were selected based on the association of shades of green with living and healthy plants. The grey shade used for the font contrasts comfortably with the icon, and subtly suggests a sleek and modern aesthetic. The APOLLO pallet contains the following colours:

- RGB: 133,165,32
  HEX: #85a520
- RGB: 147,192,31
  HEX: #93c01f
- RGB: 117,117,117
  HEX: #757575

Figure 4: APOLLO Colour Pallet

6.1.3 Templates

Based on the visual identity established by the logo and the colour pallet, templates were produced for text documents (Microsoft Word) and presentations (Microsoft PowerPoint). Templates were produced for the following types of documents:

- Deliverable documents;
- Non-Deliverable Documents, such as memos, notes or letters;
- Deliverable document reviews;
- Event reports;
- Press releases;
- Presentations.

Samples of each template are supplied in the figures below.
Figure 5: Deliverable document template

Figure 6: Non-deliverable document template
D7.1: 1st Dissemination, communication and marketing plan

This project is co-funded by the European Union

Figure 7: Deliverable document review template

Figure 8: Event report template
6.2 Website

The APOLO website (to be released at M3) will initially take the form of a web presence focused on the project (www.apollo_h2020.eu). This site will contain the basic information about the projects (structure, objectives, concept, team, etc.), as well as providing a central repository for accessing the project’s publications (deliverable documents and promotional materials), and announcing news and events.
The structure of the project-focused website is as follows; each section heading is accompanied by a brief description of the content to be included therein:

1. **HOME**: A short synthetic description of the project, sections for tweets and news, direct links to the SERVICE pages, and a link to subscribe to newsletter.

2. **PROJECT**: A summary of the APOLLO project, with reference to the call, and the project’s duration, budget and partners. The page will include:
   - A list of the work packages and a short description of each, mapped against the partners, and linked to relevant other sections.
   - A simple graphical timeline of the main project deployment milestones
   - A list of partners with descriptions and links back to the relevant WPs;
   - A list of the public deliverables along with a short description and download links of available deliverables.

3. **CONCEPT**: A discussion of the project’s background, a statement of the problem or challenge, an overview of the target markets and technologies used in the project, and a short overview of the project’s main impacts.

4. **SERVICES**: An introduction to the service platform and its mobile application and desktop interfaces, along with a description of each of the four services, the problem each service addresses, and the benefits conferred.

5. **PILOTS**: A description of each pilot (Serbia, Spain and Greece) and the partners involved, a short summary of its progress and the main results to date.

6. **NEWS & PUBLICATIONS**: A list of recent news items, links to the download sections for the newsletter (current and archive copies of web newsletter) and the publications (brochures, leaflets, press releases etc.).

7. **GET INVOLVED**: A section dedicated to engaging with audiences, containing a contact form, newsletter subscription form, a link to the user requirements survey, and a section discussing how to become a trial user

Several innovative features will be included in the website to attract customer interest and provide engaging ways of previewing the APOLLO services:

- **“Find my Farm”:** A web interface allowing users to locate their farm on a map, and be provided with information such as the next pass of Sentinel-1 over their area, and an estimation of how soon after that they could expect to receive information from APOLLO.
- **Application simulator**: A simulator of the APOLLO mobile application will be added to the website at M6, providing an early glimpse of its look and feel.
- **Screencast demonstrator**: a video capture of a computer/mobile screen, offering a tour of the APOLLO web and mobile application.

Coinciding with the release of the first working prototype of the APOLLO service, a commercial site will be made available at a different address (corresponding to the new name of the services). The original project site will remain accessible through a link (e.g. “powered by APOLLO”), but the focus of the commercial site will be promoting and selling the services, rather than discussing the project.
Both sites will be produced on the basis of the WordPress platform using available templates, modified where necessary to accommodate the required features.

### 6.3 Newsletter

The APOLLO project will publish a regular bimonthly newsletter (from M3 onwards) to inform subscribers of upcoming events, project milestones, and relevant news stories linked to the broader precision agriculture and smart farming ecosystem. The aim of the newsletter is to gain and maintain interest in the APOLLO services and act as a platform for major announcements.

The newsletter will be designed and delivered using the online service MailChimp. A list of subscribers will be generated by emailing a selection of contacts using the APOLLO communication database (Section 4.1), inviting subscription to the newsletter (preferably with one click). In addition, the project partners will be asked to distribute the newsletter to their own contacts and publicise its availability on their own channels.

### 6.4 Brochure, leaflet and factsheets

The APOLLO project will produce a brochure (M6), a leaflet (M6) and a set of factsheets (M12) to promote the services. These printed documents have slightly different purposes and target audiences (see Table 7). They will be distributed at a number of internal and external (see Section 6.8.1) events, as well as on an ad-hoc basis by the project partners within the pilot regions.

### 6.5 Social media

The APOLLO project will establish a social media presence using the following services:

- **Facebook**: Facebook is a large and well-known social network with over 1.5 billion users, which, although designed for personal use by individuals, has become an important platform for B2C communications. APOLLO will establish a Facebook page for the purpose of reaching out to groups and networks (such as Agri.EU - The Social Network of European Farmers) and for engaging in public conversations with technologically-aware farmers.

- **Twitter**: Twitter is a micro-publishing platform with some 330 million users, widely used for both B2B and B2C communications. APOLLO will establish a Twitter presence for amplifying the propagation of news, announcements and publications.

- **LinkedIn**: LinkedIn is a well-established social network aimed at professionals. With more than 400 million users, used extensively for recruitment and networking purposes. A LinkedIn presence for APOLLO (i.e. the creation of a group) will enable its promotion amongst the broader professional community in the precision agriculture and smart farming fields.

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3 The final newsletter will be released in M34 rather than M33 to coincide with the closure of the project.


5 [https://www.facebook.com/Agri.eu/](https://www.facebook.com/Agri.eu/).
6.6 Press kit

The APOLO project will develop a press kit for circulation to journalists (M6). The kit will contain press releases, background information, article suggestions and contact points for interviews in each pilot country. A number of specialised media channels (e.g. agriFuture, ENRD magazine) will be targeted with press kits, based on the master list of communication contacts (see Section 4.1).

6.7 Activities

Further to the core activities associated with the creation of tools (website, brochure, leaflets) and the use of channels (traditional and social media), a set of additional activities is foreseen in order to amplify and consolidate the communication, marketing and dissemination effort. These activities are described in the sections which follow.

6.7.1 Promotion by project partners

All APOLO project partners will be required to promote the project using the means and channels at their disposal. For example, it is envisaged that each partner will create a news item or dedicated page on their own websites to promote the project amongst their stakeholder network, and will utilise their social media accounts to amplify (by means of “liking”, “sharing” or “re-tweeting”) the material published by the APOLO accounts.

Project partners from the pilot countries will be required to produce a specific communication, dissemination and marketing plan for their region, drawing on their existing knowledge of the local specificities, stakeholder groups and communication channels. The plans will be annexed to the first Communications, Marketing and Dissemination Report (D7.7, M6).

6.7.2 Attendance at conferences events

A strategic campaign of event and conference attendance is planned for the lifetime of the APOLO project. The aim is to maximise the effect of direct interaction with relevant stakeholders, present the APOLO solution as part of the programme of speakers and to distribute APOLO marketing material to attendees. Dedicated information packages will be produced to facilitate the promotion of APOLO in the context of these events.

Attendance at the following events and conferences is foreseen throughout the life of the project:

- Geospatial World Forum;
- European Space Solutions;
- One or more of EURISY’s (non-profit association bridging space and society) thematic conferences (such as the 2015 precision agriculture conference);
- One or more of EUROGI’s (European Umbrella Organisation for Geographic Information) “Imagine” conferences;
- One or more of NEREUS’ (Network of European Regions Using Space Technologies) regional conferences;
- INSPIRE conference.

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This list will be enhanced and a calendar of planned conference attendance produced with the input from project partners (to be annexed to D7.7). Attendance at commercial trade shows will also be considered at a later stage of the project.

The APOLLO has already been represented at the Geospatial World Forum 2016, European Space Solutions 2016, and the NEREUS event “What can Sentinels do for regions?” and several other events are already scheduled within 2016:

- **Science Communication Event** linked to ESOF 2016, 24th July, Manchester, UK;

### 6.7.3 Publication of scientific results

Academic and research partners in the consortium will publish scientific papers based on the results of the research carried out within APOLLO, respecting the confidentiality of intellectual property as laid out in the consortium’s IP Policy (see deliverable D7.3). These papers will be targeted at the following indicative list of journals:

- Remote Sensing of Environment (Elsevier);
- Precision Agriculture (Springer);
- Computers and Electronics in Agriculture (Elsevier);
- International Journal of Applied Earth Observation and Geoinformation (Elsevier);

In addition, the following scientific conferences will be targeted in addition to the more commercially-oriented events listed in Section 6.7.2.

- International conference on Precision Agriculture;
- European Conference on Precision Agriculture;
- IEEE International Geoscience and Remote Sensing Symposium;
- International Conference of Agricultural Engineering;
- Remote Sensing for Agriculture, Ecosystems, and Hydrology;
- Asian Conference on Precision Agriculture – ACPA.

Regarding scientific publications, the consortium will take in account the H2020 Open Access Policy as required by the European Commission.

### 6.8 Networks and Multipliers

The strategic use of networks and other communication multipliers is considered essential to the success of the APOLLO communications, dissemination and marketing effort. Key targets in this context include the following bodies and entities:

- COPA (Committee of Professional Agricultural Organisations);
- COGECAs (General Committee for Agricultural Cooperation in the European Union).

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7 [http://www.copa-cogeca.eu/CopaHistory.aspx](http://www.copa-cogeca.eu/CopaHistory.aspx)
8 [http://www.copa-cogeca.eu/CogecaHistory.aspx](http://www.copa-cogeca.eu/CogecaHistory.aspx)
• ENRD (European Network for Regional Development), which as a priority thematic area on “Smart and Competitive Rural Areas”;
• Eurisy (a non-profit with the stated mission of bridging space and society);
• NEREUS;
• EUROGI.

The list of networks and multipliers will be included in the master database of APOLLO contacts, and continually enriched throughout the course of the project.

These networks will be targeted with strategic communications such as press releases, major project announcements and event notifications. In addition, the events and activities organised by these organisations will be used to promote the APOLLO services.

7 Schedule and Timing

This chapter concerns the question of when communication actions should take place for maximum impact. The APOLLO project spans two agricultural seasons, May to September, 2017 and 2018. This provides a general framework for the timing of the communication, dissemination and marketing effort aimed at the eventual customers of APOLLO: (small) farmers and agricultural consultants.

Since their operational need for a system like APOLLO occurs during these two periods, it is necessary to ensure that (a) services are available and (b) customers are aware of their availability by the start of the first period, with a second intensification in the lead-up to the second season. The initial APOLLO services should indeed be available by April 2017 (M12), and it would therefore seem appropriate to concentrate the communication effort in the build-up to the first period (October/M6 to April/M12), in order to attract as many early trial users to the service as possible.

The bulk of APOLLO’s published materials (brochure, leaflet, press kit) will be available as from M6, whilst factsheets will be available just before the start of the growing season in M12.

The communications plan below takes into account these two periods of intensification. It summarises the main milestones of the communications, marketing and dissemination activities as well as the availability of the relevant WP7 deliverables.

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10 http://www.eurisy.org/
11 http://www.nereus-regions.eu/
12 http://www.eurogi.org/
This project is co-funded by the European Union.
8 Monitoring and Evaluation

The impact of the APOLLO communication activities will be monitored on an ongoing basis and reported in the relevant deliverables (Communication, Marketing and Dissemination Reports; D7.7-9; due M6, M18 and M34). Data on the communication, dissemination and marking activities of each partner will be collected using an online survey tool to ensure standardisation of responses.

The table below presents the Key Performance Indicators (KPI) which will be used to evaluate the success of the project’s actions. In each case, the data will be examined with the aim of excluding those linked to actions by members of the consortium.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Performance Indicators</th>
<th>Target value</th>
<th>Means of verification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Visitors to the APOLLO webpage</td>
<td>5000</td>
<td>Analytics monitoring software (Google Analytics)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subscribers to the newsletter</td>
<td>3000</td>
<td>Newsletter system dashboard (MailChimp)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Likes&quot; of the APOLLO page on Facebook</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>Page details on Facebook</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Members of the APOLLO LinkedIn group</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>Group details on LinkedIn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Followers of the APOLLO Twitter account</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>Account details on Twitter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Articles or appearances in the media about the APOLLO project</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>Monitoring and reporting by WP7 team and project partners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Events attended by the APOLLO project team</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Printed communication material distributed</td>
<td>2500</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 8: Key Performance Indicators*

9 Conclusion

The communication, marketing and dissemination plan of the APOLLO project is intended to be a comprehensive and living document which outlines the actions, tools and channels to be used throughout the project in the promotion of the service. The plan will be updated as the project develops momentum, and as further insights are acquired into the target audiences and future customers of the operational services.
10 References