

**Vacuum Insulation Panel Association
Digital Communications & Public Affairs Working Group
Conference Call
28 November 2018, 14h00 to 15h30 CET**

Participants

John Garbutt, Kingspan
Maja Tomazin, Knauf Insulation
Michel Chauvois (Rexor)
Leonie Bietrix-Ogier (Rexor)
Raquel Ponte Costa, VIPA Executive Director
Gabriella Kemendi, VIPA International Policy Officer

Apologised

Gregor Erbenich, Porextherm
Tom Martens (Microtherm)
Miaotian Sun, Qingdao Kerui New Environmental Materials
Zhai Chuanwei, Qingdao Kerui New Environmental Materials
Christoph Tontrup, Evonik
Pascal Rousset, Rexor
Roland Caps, Va-Q-Tec
Insook Yoo, Va-Q-Tec
Gary Chalkley, Camvac Limited
Alison Navon, Avery Dennison Hanita

Minutes

1. Welcome

1.1 Governance rules

Gabriella Kemendi opened the call and reminded participants of the competition rules.

1.2 Approval of the agenda

Gabriella reminded participants that the call had been scheduled as the Board decided in September that the focus of the association in 2019 should be digital communications and that this WG should draft a communication strategy for 2019 for the board's approval. The agenda was approved with no additions.

1.3 Approval minutes previous conference call 31 July 2018 and review of action items

Gabriella noted that all actions from the previous conference call had been completed. The minutes of the call on 31 July were approved.

2. Internal issues

2.1 Chairmanship

The chairmanship term of this WG runs for two years. The term of Mr Zhai Chuanwei is expiring, therefore a new chairperson was needed to take the leadership of the WG. Maja Tomazin (Knauf Insulation) offered to take up the role.

Decision: The WG unanimously approved Maja Tomazin as the new chair of the WG.

2.2 Change of WG name & new participants

The Board insisted in September that the focus of 2019 should be *digital* communications and a proposal was made to change the name of this WG to “Digital Communications & Public Affairs WG”.

Decision: The group agreed with changing the name of the WG to “Digital Communications & Public Affairs WG”.

An increased participation in the WG was also encouraged by the Board in September. Therefore a call for interest was made and two new people joined the group: Tom Martens (Microtherm) and Léonie Bietrix-Ogier (Rexor). They were welcomed to the group.

2.3 Update of Terms of Reference

The Terms of Reference of the WG were slightly amended by the office to reflect the change of the WG's name and other minor changes.

Decision: The group agreed with the proposed changes to the Terms of Reference.

3. Update and discussion on communication activities

A discussion on the communication activities under this point was deemed necessary to be able to better assess under point 4 which items should be part of the communication strategy for 2019.

3.1 VIPA promotional video

3.1.1 Update on video

Gabriella reminded participants of the fact that the video was released on 13 September, that a press release was drafted in EN, FR & DE, that the video's subtitles were translated to several languages and distributed for free via EurActiv & The Association Magazine. The video was not accepted for publication on the Build UP portal on the grounds that there is not enough explanation on how VIPs contribute to energy efficiency. (See slides)

3.1.2 Update on statistics

An update was provided on the current video statistics. (See slides). It was noted that the number of views on Youtube could be improved & members were encouraged to share the video via their internal channels if not done already. It was also suggested that members like the video on Youtube, which will increase its visibility, and that they share the VIPA video in their Youtube channels.

Action:

- Members to like the VIPA video on Youtube, to add it to their Youtube channels & to proactively share it via other internal channels.

3.1.3 Ideas to increase view count

The Secretariat looked into a number of channels for distributing the video, but given that most of them were costly, the Board had decided not to use any budget for this purpose. Participants were asked to come up with ideas on how to further increase the view count of the video. Members suggested to make the video more visible on the website (put it higher up) and to make sure there is a link from the thumbnail. It was noted that a social media account would help with further distribution.

Action:

- Gabriella to put video higher up on website and ensure there's a link in thumbnail.

3.2 VIPA website

3.2.1 Website optimization

Gabriella has been in touch with the agency that manages the website (Alias) and they provided a series of recommendations in terms of use of keywords, metatitles and meta descriptions to be taken into account whenever creating new content for the website. Alias will check with the developers of the website what they can offer to optimize the website and will send a quote. The overall objective is to increase website traffic and achieve higher ranking on search engines. Gabriella noted that the website was created in 2014 and that it has not been updated since then & that lifespans of websites are getting shorter and shorter. Members did not consider a revamping of the current website necessary though. Nevertheless some changes to improve the website will be needed. New pictures may be needed for this, therefore Gabriella will ask members to provide some. She also noted that Google seems to be changing its algorithm often and that currently the parameters used for defining the ranking of a specific website are overall trustworthiness and expertise rather than the use of specific keywords.

Action:

- Gabriella to ask members to provide new pictures for the website.

3.2.2 Website statistics

Members reviewed the updated statistics prior to the call. (See slides for overview). Gabriella noted that the page views increase when press releases are issued (especially on standardization, energy efficiency, conference, video, launch of Chinese website), which shows that there is a need to create more content. Referrals by members should also be increased. Members were asked whether they have suggestions to improve the visibility of the Chinese section of the website. Maja volunteered to check whether using other channels in China would be more effective than websites, like WeChat. The possibility of hiring a translation company to translate to Mandarin new website content was mentioned as an option to increase content on that section of the website. Gabriella explained that Miaotian translated the latest press releases to Mandarin but she is no longer working for Creek. Members agreed to use a translation agency so all press releases can be published both in English and in Mandarin. Rexor mentioned they had a Chinese website but this was cancelled because it was never that successful despite the considerable investment in content and Mandarin translation.

Action:

- Maja to check best channels to promote website content in China.
- Gabriella to ask a translation agency for a quote to translate all press releases to Chinese mandarin.

3.3 External events

3.3.1 Update on contacts

Gabriella provided an update on contacts with Global Insulation Conference, IFA Berlin, Cool Chain Conference, BAU and ISH (see slides).

3.3.2 Updated list of events

An updated list of events was circulated with the WG prior to the call for members to assess which events are relevant for the association to get in touch with. The list will be re-circulated to members as a reminder to check the events. Maja Tomazin noted that events for 2020 could also be included. Gabriella mentioned that this will be done pending confirmation from the Board that external events should indeed be part of the communication strategy.

Action:

- Gabriella to re-circulate list of events after call.

4. Focus VIPA 2019: digital communications

4.1 Development of several communication strategies

4.1.1 Building blocks (target groups, objectives, budget)

The Board agreed in September that the objectives of the communication strategy are twofold: 1) to attract new members & 2) to raise awareness of the association with stakeholders, policy-makers and the general public.

4.1.2 Platforms & tools

a) Existing platforms and tools

The tools used for communication purposes at the moment are:

- website,
- press releases,
- case studies,
- bi-annual newsletters & annual report,
- flyers,
- promotional video,
- partnerships with external events,
- VIPA conference (first edition in 2018),
- Build UP portal.

It was agreed by members that these tools will be kept in the communication strategy. Furthermore, these tools should be the first items to work on and to enhance before working on new ones. In order to increase the content generated for the website, more press releases & case studies should be produced. The content of these should be improved, taking into account that specific keywords should always be present. Gabriella will ask members for a list of keywords. In order to generate more content, older press releases & case studies could be republished (with some changes). Members agreed that an external version of the newsletters & annual reports can be posted on the website. Members believe the current frequency of the newsletter is adequate. Given that the promotional video has been positively received, further videos could be envisaged: shorter videos on the different applications of VIPs. Collaborating with external events will contribute to increasing the visibility of the association, however, based on the experience with IFA Berlin, they have to be selected carefully. Further editions of the VIPA conference and uploading relevant content on the Build UP portal are also tools that are useful to increase visibility of the association.

Decision: Tools used currently should be part of the communication strategy.

Action:

- Gabriella to ask members for a list of keywords.

b) Future platforms & tools

Presence on social media (LinkedIn): It was noted that LinkedIn would be the most suitable social media option for the association. The need to be present on social media was emphasized by members as an important tool used nowadays to disseminate content. Gabriella also reported that according to a workshop she attended on digital lobbying, most associations in Brussels are present on at least two social media channels (LinkedIn being the most used). Members agreed it should be part of the communication strategy as a priority. Management of the account will need to be discussed though (either the office or members on a rotating basis). A social media policy & content calendar could be developed to anticipate any incoming questions, as well as a spokesperson.

Infographics: They could be used to have a better presentation of the VIP market (for all target groups & especially for policy-makers) and they would generate content for the website. Data could be extracted from the potential market study that the association envisages to conduct (decision pending). Members agreed Infographics should be part of the communication strategy.

Webinars: Gabriella is in touch with Build Up to see whether the webinar on the Annex 65 project can be organised. Given that this webinar is already foreseen for 2019, members noted that further webinars should not be part of the communication strategy at the moment. An assessment of the Annex 65 webinar will be needed first in order to decide whether further webinars should be developed.

Manifesto: Next year there will be European Parliament elections and a new Commission will be put in place. In view of this, one possibility is to create an association position indicating what is expected from the new legislators in their next term for the VIPs sector. Members agreed that this could be a good tool to create visibility and agreed it should be part of the communication strategy.

Interviews with stakeholders/policy makers: Whenever relevant topics arise, interviews could be organised, which would be then uploaded on the website. Members agreed this should not be a priority of the communication strategy. It should be kept on the “reserve list”.

Recording short video statements: Whenever relevant topics arise, short video statements could be created, which would be then uploaded on the website. Members agreed this should not be a priority of the communication strategy. It should be kept on the “reserve list”.

Blog: It was agreed to keep this on the “reserve list” as the association does not create the necessary content to keep a blog alive.

Decision: Together with the tools currently used, the following will be added as a priority: LinkedIn account, infographics and manifesto. The following tools will be put on a reserve list: webinars (other than Annex 65 webinar), interviews, recording of short video statements and blog.

4.1.3 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

A number of key performance indicators will need to be set in order to assess the success of a given tool. Indicative list of indicators: new members, increased website traffic, increased number of mails via contact form & requests for speaking slots, alliances.

Gabriella will provide a first draft of the communications strategy on the basis of these discussions, for members to review.

Action:

- Gabriella to provide first draft of communication strategy.

5. Public Affairs

5.1 Priorities for 2019

In the EU, there will be European Parliament elections in May 2019 and a new Commission will be in place by November 2019. The Secretariat will monitor legislative developments relevant for VIPA International. With regards to gathering information about regulatory issues outside Europe, Raquel mentioned that so far we have relied on our members to share info (Creek sends an update about China which is included in the Newsletter). This is not always done and not in a very consistent manner. One alternative to that would be to hire a consultancy to prepare an update on regulatory issues in other parts of the world a couple of times a year. Members agreed that might be worth the investment.

Action:

- Members to identify regulatory priorities for Europe that the association should work on in 2019.

6. VIPA conference in Vienna

6.1 Optimization of conference material

The WG was asked for suggestions on how to improve material that was presented during the VIPA conference. One option would be to use the case studies shown by Pouget Consultants to create case studies and accompanying press releases for the VIPA website. Members agreed with this way forward and no other suggestions were put forward.

Action:

- Office to create case study out of the video shown by Pouget Consultant during the VIPA conference in Vienna.

6.2 VIPA conference 2020

Members were informed that the Board agreed to continue organising the VIPA conference as it turned out to be a successful event. The next edition will take place in spring 2020. Details to be discussed.

7. AoB

Nothing was discussed.

8. Closure & date of next conference call

The call was closed at 15:40 CET.

A call will be organised mid-January 2018 to discuss the draft Communications strategy.