

Communications Strategy for CSC's Virtual Tour

Issue

CSC is launching a Virtual Tour of a federal institution. This online tour showcases various elements of maximum-, medium-, and minimum-security facilities. A ministerial event is being planned to launch the Virtual Tour in February followed by a virtual roll-out to the country.

Background

Based on the significant public interest in attending the Kingston Penitentiary tours in 2014, Canadian correctional facilities remain a long standing subject of interest for the public. In addition, many victims groups have expressed interest in being able to see inside an institution. For safety and security reasons, this is difficult to accommodate.

The Communications and Engagement Sector has developed an online "Virtual Tour" of a federal correctional institution, to be posted on the new Government of Canada website, www.canada.ca. This tour is based on Collins Bay Institution, with some elements being photographed at Bath Institution. The virtual tour will consist of 360-degree panorama scenes of various areas within an institution, showcasing elements of maximum-, medium-, and minimum-security facilities. Each room of the tour will include an audio narrative and interactive items to allow online participants to experience and learn about CSC's institutions. The tour is based on the following elements of an institution:

- Security perimeter
- Entrance
- Visitors area
- Minimum, medium and maximum cell and range
- CORCAN workshop
- Program room/classroom
- Aboriginal cultural centre
- Chapel
- Health care centre

Communications Objectives

- To proactively provide all audiences with clear, timely, and transparent information about CSC facilities
- To inform Canadians, including internal and external audiences, of the Virtual Tour and encourage them to utilize this online tool
- To ensure our reach is national for the launch of the Virtual Tour
- To impart knowledge of CSC's work and programs and increase awareness of the federal correctional system
- To support the CSC priority of productive relationships with increasingly diverse partners, stakeholders, and others involved in public safety.

Public Environment

According to research studies, Corrections is the sector of the Canadian criminal justice system (CJS) for which the rates of public confidence are the lowest. One-quarter (25%) of Canadians believe the correctional system is doing a good job at community supervision, releasing offenders appropriately and helping them become law abiding citizens.¹

Within the CJS, the police have the highest rate of public confidence. This is, in part, due to the public's familiarity with this sector of the CJS. Compared to other sectors of the CJS, the public is least aware of the mandate and operations of the correctional system.²

As correctional institutions are not easily accessible to the public, Canadians build their knowledge of institutions based on what they see on television, in movies and word-for-mouth.

When Kingston Penitentiary closed, approximately 20,000 people visited the facility as part of fundraisers for United Way and Habitat for Humanity. These tours generated much interest from the public and the media.

Also, CSC receives a fair amount of media requests to film inside institutions. These requests are frequently not accommodated due to operational and security reasons.

Strategic Considerations

Ministerial Event :

- The Minister will be holding an event to launch the virtual tour in February. The Message Event Proposal is being developed by Strategic Communications and will encompass two options – a virtual launch with a Ministerial statement, or an event at the University of Ottawa with criminology students, featuring the Minister announcing the launch in person.
- CSC's launch and product roll-out will immediately follow the Minister's announcement.

CSC launch:

- All communication, both internal and external will be issued simultaneously and in both official languages.
- Employees in institutions, more specifically correctional officers, do not have regular access to a computer or audio capability. This has to be taken into consideration when communicating the launch of the virtual tour to CSC employees.
- Several Canadians do not have access to or use social media. All social media messaging will have to be accessible on CSC's webpage (main page).
- All messages/communications must have a direct link to the virtual tour (Twitter, YouTube, internal messages etc.)

¹ *Public Confidence in the Canadian Criminal Justice System: A review of the evidence*

² *idem*

- Since inmates do not have access to the Internet, communication products will have to be printed out for them. This could be accessible in the Visit & Communication areas to inform families of inmates as well.
- For a teaser campaign on social media we need to be prepared with holding lines in case we receive requests from employees, media, the public or partners. We must avoid having the news of the Virtual Tour released before the ministerial announcement.
- If the teaser is prior to the release, we will also have to ensure that it does not create resentment from staff and others that CSC is not being completely transparent and forthcoming, or that CSC is hiding something from them.
- Social Media is not accessible to all employees within CSC. Tweets can be included in editions of “This Week at CSC” and/or GcConnex.
- We also need to prepare media lines to respond to queries expected following the launch.
- We need to prepare for a negative reaction to the launch. Risk mitigation could include drafting media lines and messages for other audiences/ a plan in case of negative social media backlash. We need to address questions such as how much taxpayer money was spent on the virtual tour and launch.
- We will also need to develop a response for those who perceive that CSC is using the virtual tour to position a positive image (whitewashing) when issues such as mental health care and administrative segregation are top of the public’s mind.
- We will need to prepare media lines explaining why we chose to film the Virtual Tour in a men’s institution.
- If there are many people viewing the Virtual Tour simultaneously the system may crash. We will need to make sure IT is aware of this risk.
- To keep public interest, follow-up tweets and messages should be sent at previously determined times after the launch.

Target Audiences

Internal	External
Employees <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CX’s • Senior Management • Parole Officers • Program Officers • Regional Employees • NHQ Committees (i.e. CAC, VAC) Volunteers Offenders	Families of Offenders Victims Secondary and post-secondary schools (Criminology, Psychology, Police Services, high school) Partners Victim-Serving Organizations Media General Public Federal, Provincial, Territorial, and Municipal Governments

Key Messages

- CSC is launching an online Virtual Tour of a federal correctional institution.
- This tour provides Canadians with an opportunity to see inside a federal institution from any computer with Internet access.

- Viewers can tour a minimum, medium and maximum security cell and range, as well as various other areas of an institution including the chapel, workshop, programs room and health care centre.
- This tour helps ensure that CSC provides the public with timely, accurate, clear, objective and complete information about its policies, programs, services and initiatives in an innovative way that meets the needs of a variety of target audiences.

Activities and Products

Activity	Audience	OPI	Description	Estimated Completion Date
Ministerial Announcement Event	Media General Public	MO & CSC	TBD	
MEP	Minister's Office	Strat Comms	Provide MO with a proposed plan, timeline, location, key messages and requirements for event.	Drafted by: Jan. 23 Approved by: TBC
Video	All external audiences Employees Committees Volunteers	E-Comms	Short and catchy video to promote the VT. (mostly text and images) Will be presented to all NHQ employees at the Learning Day (Feb. 19) and sent shortly after to all CSC employees through a Gen-comm (from the Commissioner's mailbox) with a link to the InfoNet. The video will be posted and searchable on YouTube and will be distributed to each of our subscribers. The video will be linked to several of the communications products.	Drafted by: Jan. 28 Approved by: Feb. 16
Gen-Communiqué (for video)	All CSC Employees	E-Comms	Sent to inform all employees of the upcoming VT launch and distribute video shown at Learning Day.	Drafted by: Jan. 28 Approved by: Feb. 16
Internet Homepage message for video	All external audiences Employees Committees Volunteers	E-Comms	Image and blurb for a rotating homepage tab. The image will be directly from the VT or an institution. The message will link directly to the video.	Drafted by: Jan. 28 Approved by: Feb. 16

Media Advisory	Media	Media Relations	Provide time, location and contact information to sign up for the event.	Drafted by: Jan. 30 Approved by: Feb. 13
News Release	All external audiences	Media Relations	Provide information on the announcement including a quote from the Minister and the Commissioner, a link to the VT, the YouTube video and CSC's Twitter feed (with Hashtag).	Drafted by: Jan. 30 Approved by: Feb. 13
Media Lines	Media	Strat Comms	Develop general lines about the VT. Holding lines will also be developed to be used before the launch.	Drafted by: Feb. 11 Approved by: Feb. 20
FAQs (one-pager quick facts)	Employees Committees (ex CAC, VAC) Volunteers Families of Offenders Victims Partners Media Offenders General Public	Strat Comms	Promote and provide a better understanding of the VT. Ask the Citizen Engagement group to share this document with CSC partners and volunteers. Print out the one-pager so employees who do not work at computers and offenders will have easier access to the information. Copies should also be available in V&C. The one-pager will be available on CSC's website and InfoNet.	Drafted by: Feb. 11 Approved by: Feb. 20
Speaking Points for Wardens	CX's Parole Officers Program Officers Regional Employees Offenders	Strat Comms	RDCs will send wardens a set of speaking points based on media lines and FAQs. The speaking points will be sent to RDCs along with the memo. RDCs will be encouraged to share with wardens and parole officers who will share with their employees.	Drafted by: Feb. 11 Approved by: Feb. 20
Memo from ACCE to EXCOM	Senior Management	Strat Comms	To announce the VT, and providing supporting products (speaking notes, FAQs) RDCs will be encouraged to share with wardens and parole officers who will share with their employees.	Drafted by: Feb. 11 Approved by: Feb. 20

Gen-Communiqué	Employees	E-Comms	Commissioner's message to announce the launch of the VT. The message will include a link to the VT.	Drafted by: Feb. 11 Approved by: Feb. 20
Twitter Campaign - bank of tweets and plan for other departments to re-tweet	All external audiences Employees Committees Volunteers	E-Comms	Develop a bank of tweets to be disseminated at the time of the launch and over the following year to promote the VT. The tweets will link to a promotional YouTube video and the tour itself. Hashtag #CSCtourSCC will be used for all tweets. Draft direct message asking departments to re-tweet.	Drafted by: Feb. 18 Approved by: Feb. 20
Internet Homepage Message for VT	All external audiences Employees Committees Volunteers	E-Comms	Image and blurb for a rotating homepage tab. The image will be directly from the VT or an institution. The message will link directly to the VT.	Drafted by: Feb. 20 Approved by: Feb. 22
SharePoint Internal Survey for employees	Employees	E-Comms	Internal SharePoint survey will be sent to employees to evaluate the VT itself, and the launch initiative. This survey will be sent out in This Week @CSC. It will include questions about how employees found out about the virtual tour, what communication dissemination methods worked and did not work, how they felt about the virtual tour, what they liked and didn't like. It will be a short, direct survey with multiple choice and short answer questions.	Drafted by: Mar. 18 Approved by: Mar. 25
Letter from Commissioner	Post-secondary schools, stakeholder groups, other government departments such as provincial and municipal police services, provincial, territorial and municipal governments	TBD	A letter signed by the Commissioner will be sent to a mailing list that includes post-secondary schools, stakeholder groups, other government departments such as provincial and municipal police services, provincial, territorial and municipal governments. The letter will explain what the VT	Drafted by: Mar. 18 Approved by: Apr. 1

			<p>is, why it is such an important initiative, and the benefits of viewing and sharing the virtual tour with their organizations.</p> <p>The letter for schools could encourage them to invite a CSC representative in their class for a presentation and question period. We will work with the Speakers Bureau to ensure speakers are prepared to show the virtual tour.</p>	
Mailing list for Commissioner letter	Post-secondary schools, stakeholder groups, other government departments such as provincial and municipal police services, provincial, territorial and municipal governments	TBD	Create a mailing list to distribute the letter.	<p>Drafted by: Mar. 18</p> <p>Approved by: Apr. 1</p>
Let's Talk Article	Employees	Strat Comms	TBD	3 months following the launch
Public Service Announcement (PSA) - Written	All external audiences	Strat Comms	TBD	

Launch Roll-Out

Date & time of release	Product	Strategy
	Message Event Plan	
February 18	Message from the Commissioner (Video)	Send the video to all CSC staff from the Commissioner's mailbox. The message will be delayed until 3 p.m. on Feb. 19.
February 19 (Learning Day)	Video	Video will be shown to NHQ employees during Learning Day.
February 23	This Week @ CSC (Video)	The message sent out on Feb 19 will be included in "This Week @ CSC".

February 23	Video	The video will be shared externally: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - YouTube with a link to CSC website - Internet Homepage Message (video) - Twitter
February 23	Memo from ACCE to EXCOM (including FAQs & speaking points for wardens)	The memo will be sent via e-mail from the ACCE's mailbox. A note on the e-mail will clarify that the information cannot be disseminated before the actual launch.
February 25 (on dev site)	VT Internet Homepage message (VT) FAQs Twitter Direct Twitter message Media Advisory (Embargoed) News Release (Embargoed)	Products will be posted in dev for review to be ready for the launch.
February 26 (Time TBC based on time of launch)	Media Advisory	Will be sent through Marketwire nationally (code 30)
February 27 – morning (if in-person event is chosen)	Media Advisory	Will be sent through Marketwire nationally (code 30)
February 27	Ministerial Event	
February 27 – morning	News Release	Will be sent through Marketwire nationally (code 30) in advance embargoed until time of event
February 27 – simultaneously with the NR	VT Internet Homepage message (VT) FAQs Twitter Direct Twitter message Media Advisory News Release	Product will go live.
February 27	Message from the Commissioner (VT)	Send the message to all CSC staff from the Commissioner's mailbox.
February 27	Speaking points & FAQs	RDCs and wardens will distribute FAQs. These will have to be printed out and made available to offenders and their families (V&C area). FAQs will also be posed in employee common areas.
February 28	Letter from the Commissioner to stakeholder groups, other government departments such as provincial and municipal police services, provincial, territorial and municipal governments.	Citizen Engagement will send the letter to CSC partners, committees and volunteers. Intergovernmental Relations will send the letter to other government departments.
March 2	This Week @ CSC (VT)	The message from the Commissioner that was sent out February 27 will be included

		in "This Week @ CSC".
April 6	Sharepoint Internal Survey for employees	Send the Survey in "This Week @ CSC".
June 2015	Let's Talk	TBD
September 2015 (1st week)	Letter from Commissioner to Post-Secondary Schools.	Citizen Engagement will send the letter to Post-Secondary Schools.
Ongoing	Virtual Tour promotion	<p>Link to the tour in the useful links section of News Releases, and at the end of media responses. The tiger team will also engage the Correspondence Unit so they can add the link to the end of any correspondence that comes from CSC.</p> <p>Tweets will continue for a year following the launch. More generic messages will be issued once every two weeks until February 2016. Tweets will messages such as: "Are you a student in criminology? Check</p>

Evaluation

The following mechanisms will be used to evaluate the success of the Virtual Tour launch:

- Number of Tweets and re-Tweets
- Media coverage (tone, location, # of articles)
- Number of people who "take the Tour", monitoring website hits
- Number of media requests
- Feedback from employees who viewed the Virtual Tour
- Employee internal survey