Strategic Communications Plan Research Brief

Presented to:

Long Beach Board of Water Commissioners July 2, 2020





Goals

Improve overall communication and engagement efforts

Develop in line with Strategic Plan Guiding Principle:

Collaborate with stakeholders to advance the interests of the Long Beach Water Department



Communications Plan Project Phases

- 1. Research and insights
- 2. Strategic Communication Plan development
- 3. Program of work planning
- 4. Implementation
- 5. Evaluation

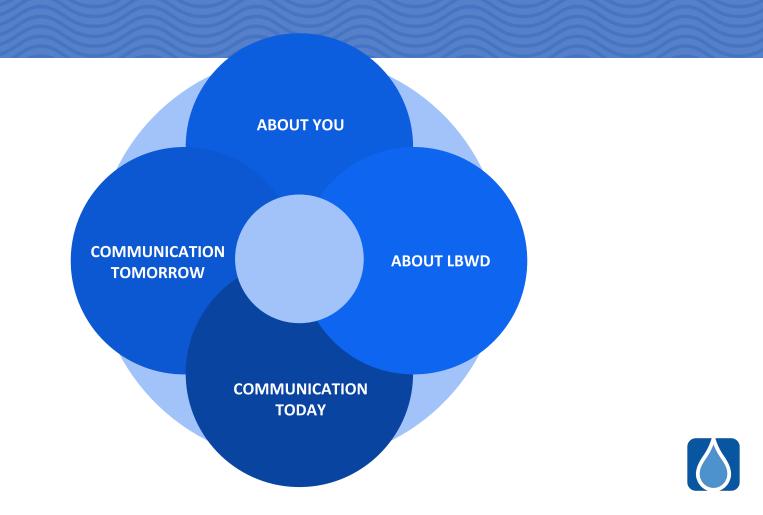




The Research Process

- 1. Communications Audit
- 2. SWOT Analysis
- 3. One-on-One Interviews
- 4. Focus Groups
- 5. Customer Survey







Findings



Communications Audit



Communications Tone & Style

Approachable, easy to understand

- Opportunities:
 - Use plain language standards
 - Focus on the "why"
 - Ensure sub-brands are cohesive and under LBWD branding umbrella
 - More translations



Branding and Design

Well-designed, engaging graphics and color palette

- Opportunities:
 - Further refine
 - Reduce "busyness"



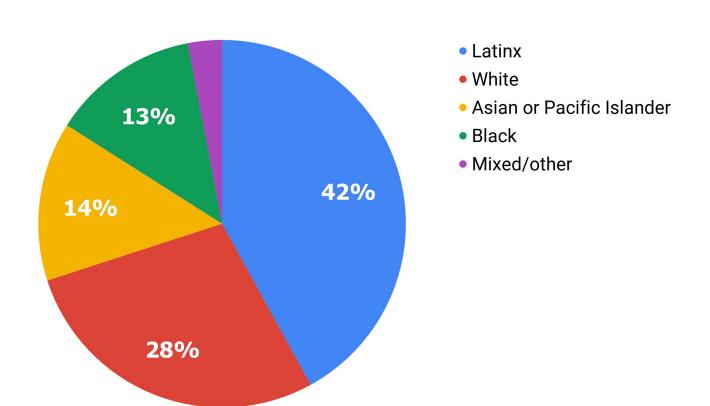
Social Media

- Strong social media presence
- Content is smart, engaging and optimized for social media

- Current following:
 - Facebook nearly 13k followers
 - Instagram nearly 3k followers
 - Twitter Over 7k followers
- Opportunity:
 - Further refine messaging and campaigns



Diverse Population

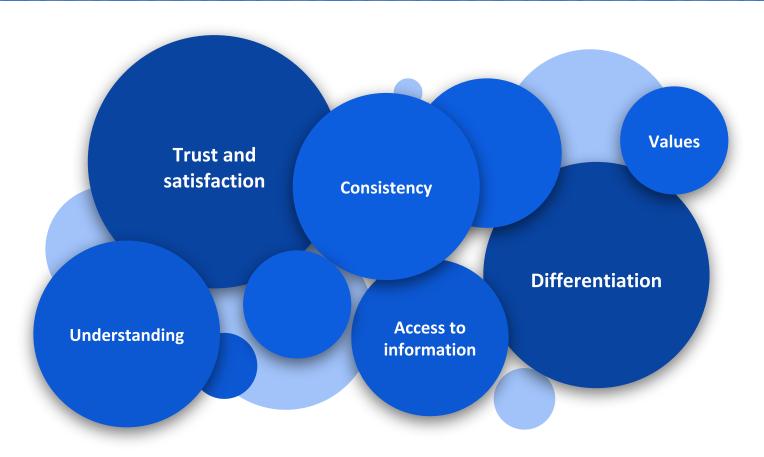




SWOT Analysis



What does success look like?





Right number of employees

Narrow focus/mission of sewer/water vs all city services

Autonomous with own board

Opportunities

Weaknesses



• Pensions/benefits

Workforce turnover

• City finances/Measure M

Opportunities

Weaknesses



Weaknesses

Cultural pride/diversity in community and LBWD

Emerging tools – social media

 Partnerships – other water agencies, associations, mayor/city council

Opportunities



Weaknesses

Opportunities

- Regulatory compliance
- Statewide supply challenges, climate change, disasters (natural and man-made (cybersecurity), economy
- Succession planning/losing employees to other agencies



One-on-One Interviews

- Strong support for communications
- Genuine trust and collaboration
- Conservation is a huge win
- Engaging all audiences
- Impact to Department's credibility
- Employee retention



Focus Groups

- Conservation program is a win
- Department is respected
- Customer service and communications are strong
- Need role clarity City of Long Beach vs. Long Beach Water Department
- Concerns about Department (and City) spending need to be addressed
- Water quality is always a concern
- Need more transparency around rate increases and Measure M



Customer Survey

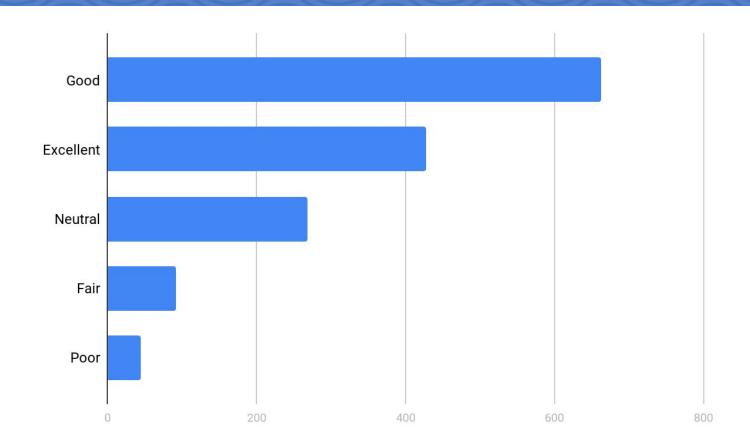
- Overall Impression of LBWD
- Satisfaction with Department staff, management and Water Commission

Survey participants:

- 94% residential customers
 - 87% single family, 13% multi-family
 - o 80% own, 20% rent
- 52% over 55 years of age, 4% between 18-25 years
- 96% English as a primary language

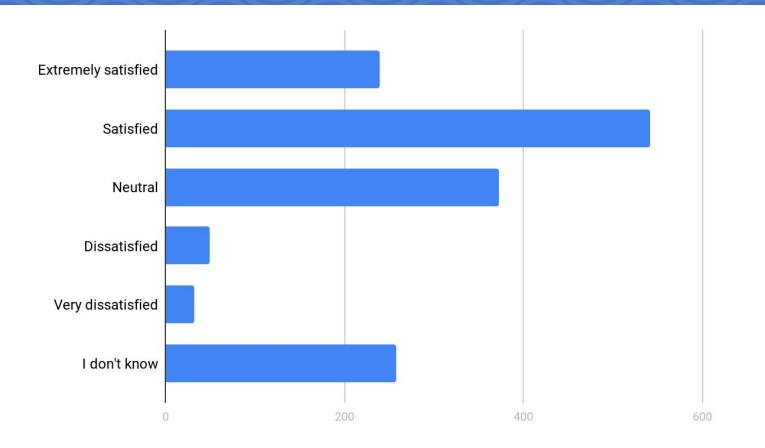


Overall Impression of LBWD



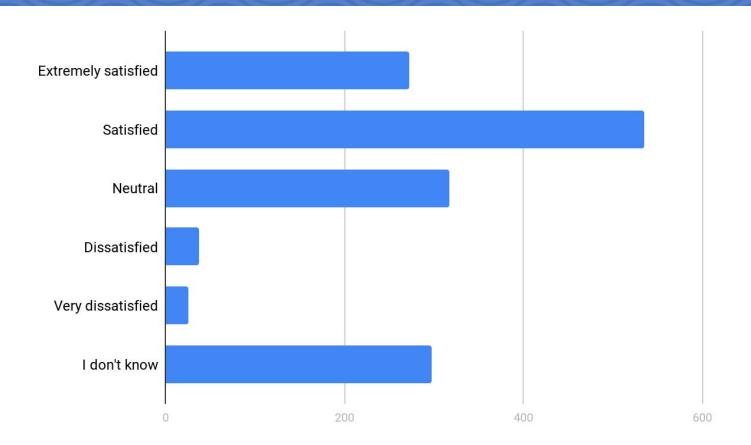


Satisfaction with staff, management, and Commission





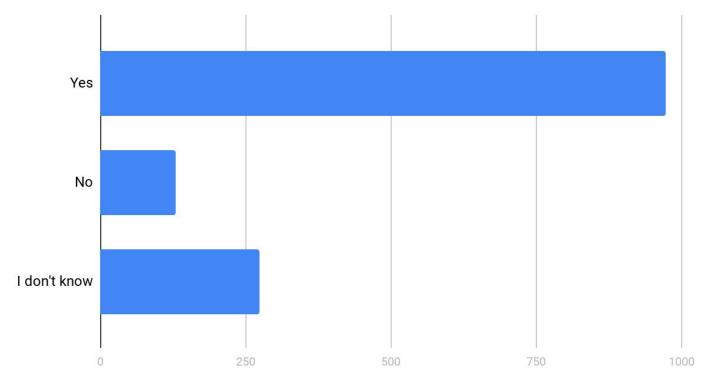
Satisfaction with Customer Service





Department Mission

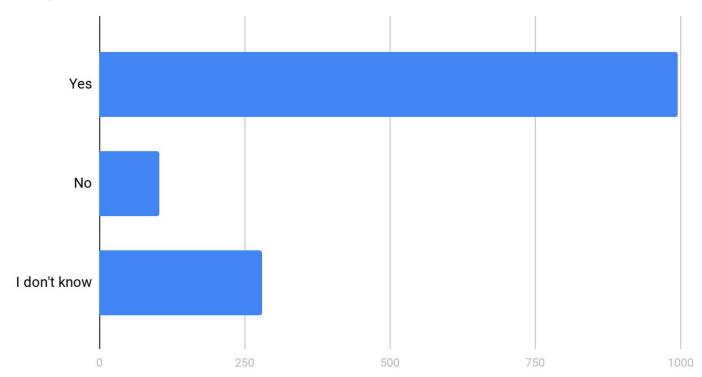
Do you think the Department is fulfilling its mission?





Department as an Information Source

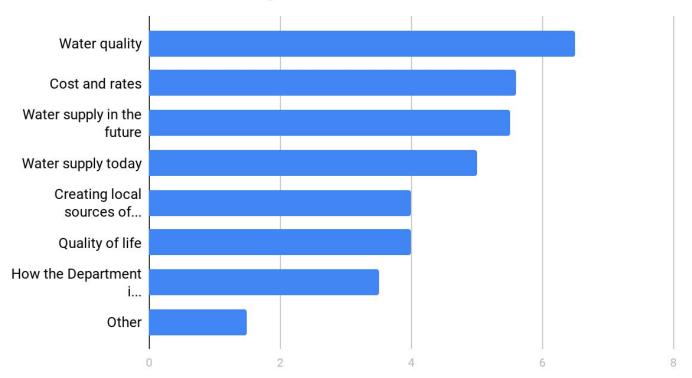
Do you see LBWD as a trusted source of information on water?





Concerns about Water Issues & Personal Responsibility

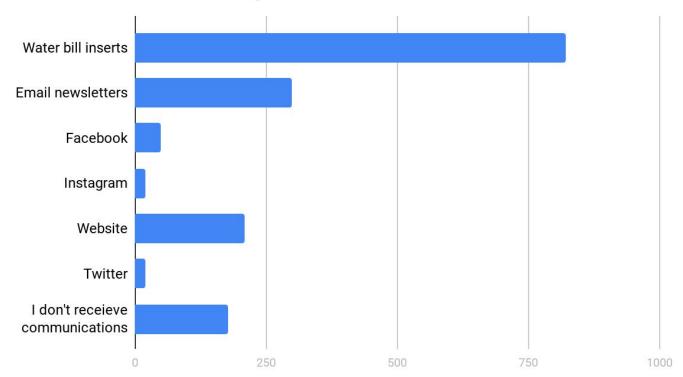
What issues most concern you?





Department Communications

Which communications do you receive?





Who is Long Beach Water Department?

"I honestly don't know what you do for me as a consumer.

I just know that you're a necessary budget item. I don't

know why or how you spend the money I send you

monthly but I'm able to take showers and cook with no

problem, so maybe that's thanks to you?"



Comments Summary

What's Going Well	What Needs Improvement
 Water quality Customer service Water conservation Good communications 	 Understanding water bill Affordability of water rates Trust and Measure M Crisis and construction communication





Recommendations from Research

- 1. Visibility
- 2. WIIFM What's In It For Me?
- 3. Community values
- 4. Style and plain language
- 5. Collaboration
- 6. Partnerships
- 7. Engagement
- 8. Education
- 9. Build trust



Next Steps

- 1. July 2 (today) Board presentation on research findings, incorporate Board feedback
- 2. In-person Board Workshop TBD (when Health Order allows)
- 3. Consultant and Public Affairs Team develop remainder of plan (strategies, tactics, etc.)
- **4.** Board update
- 5. Implementation

