



WATER SKI CANADA

Communications Plan

*A comprehensive communications plan
to promote the sport of waterskiing in Canada*

April 2003

Introduction

Overall Assumption

The Water Ski Canada (WSC) Communications Plan is aligned with and supports the WSC Business Plan.

Mission

WSC works to effectively represent, develop and promote all types of water skiing in Canada.

Vision

WSC is the recognized national sport organization responsible for the visibility and recognition of classical, barefoot, marathon, adaptive, and cable disciplines. It also includes recreational and any emerging water skiing discipline.

Operating Guidelines

- Programs and services are communicated in both official languages
- Communications will be managed with an athlete-centred, coach-focused approach
- WSC will be inclusive in all its communication practices

Overall Goals of the WSC Communications Plan

- Promote a positive image and improve the profile of wake sports and Water Ski Canada to the public, its members, its stakeholders, the media and sponsors
- Assist in increasing sources of revenue, including government, sponsorship, donations, membership and fundraising

In order to achieve these communications goals, twelve goals were established as follows:

1. A clean, professional, consistent, inclusive “look” for WSC.
2. WSC is positioned as THE primary source of information on wake sports in Canada.
3. A substantial increase in the amount and quality of media coverage of WSC and wake sport disciplines at both the national and community levels.
4. WSC is perceived as an important contributor by major water-sport related businesses and sport organizations.
5. WSC is a respected leader within the sport community.
6. The successes of WSC members are recognized publicly and throughout the Canadian amateur sport community.
7. Members feel like they are part of a worthwhile, inclusive organization – the WSC “family”.
8. National team members who support and contribute to WSC promotional efforts.
9. National championships that are run “professionally” and enhance the profile of WSC.
10. Develop a comprehensive marketing plan.
11. Ensure all properties enhance the image of WSC.
12. Introduce wake sports to various corporations.

Action steps were identified, in greater detail for several areas of the plan that were deemed to be the highest priority.

Target Groups

- The public – all Canadians (positive image and lasting impression of WSC)
- Members – athletes, coaches, members, administrators, provincial water ski associations, clubs
- Stakeholders – members, funding agencies (Sport Canada, COC), related sport organizations (Sport Matters, CCES, Athletes CAN)
- Media – written, broadcast, internet
- Sponsors – corporate partners and suppliers

Plan Development

A private communications firm was commissioned to analyze the current situation and to recommend a plan designed to achieve the association's communications goals. The principles of the firm are experienced and respected communications practitioners currently within the Canadian sport system, employed in high profile positions and organizations.

They collected a large amount of material, surveyed the landscape for the sport and the environment, and conducted many meetings with staff.

A small number of key stakeholders were also interviewed to provide their insights and general observations. Individuals were interviewed and provided invaluable feedback which was incorporated into the communications plan. Here is a summary of emerging patterns and consistent messaging from the respondents.

- The most important thing is for WSC to increase media awareness so that people know and are educated about the sport. This awareness campaign should begin locally (at the community level) with a goal to increase awareness nationally.
- The biggest assets that WSC has are its athletes and national championships. They need to be promoted and showcased professionally, with a view to increase awareness for the sport and get the public turned on to the sport of waterskiing.
- WSC should be sharing its goal of becoming the #1 water ski team in the world. Success brings attention and interest - if we share our results, we'll get increased media coverage, more interest from the corporate community and more people participating in our sport.
- Above all else, WSC needs to make its national championships a fun, entertaining and exciting event for the public, the participants and the sponsors. We need to create incentives to encourage top athletes to attend and ensure they don't conflict with professional events.
- WSC should promote the image of waterskiing as a competitive sport. Most people don't understand the complexity of the sport and the skill required to compete at the highest level. Make it easy to understand, fun to watch and a worthwhile sport to support!

Objective 1: A clean, professional, consistent, inclusive “look” for WSC

Key Strategy: determine most effective/up-to-date image for WSC

ACTION ITEMS	PRIORITY	NOTES/RESPONSIBILITY
1.1 Under go branding exercise to determine new, fresh image and establish buy-in from key stakeholders.	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Determine budget, outsource to small company to save money within this exercise - WSC needs to determine if it will continue with its current name or broaden the scope of its activity. Interviews indicated that WSC should change its name but not because it is feeling pressured to do so by wake sports. - Important to note that including multi logos will be difficult to manage and may impede the successful branding efforts of the key organization (WSC).
1.2 Develop new logo that reflects WSC new direction to incorporate all wake sports.	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - WSC with support from design company.
1.3 Develop effective tag line for all communication and promotional materials.	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This may address the challenge of having one logo speak for many disciplines.
1.4 Provincial association component	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure that provincial associations are kept informed in the process. Consult with a few provinces on the re-branding to seek advice and feedback. - Explore possibility of provincial version of new national logo - Ensure that provincial associations have all necessary versions of your new logo and are promoting it according to specifications.

Objective 2: WSC is positioned as THE primary source of information on wake sports in Canada

Key strategy 1: ensure current methods of promotion and external communication are effective

ACTION ITEMS	PRIORITY	NOTES/RESPONSIBILITY
2.1 Conduct communications review with key stakeholders to determine effectiveness of magazine, website and other promotional materials.	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - WSC can conduct this survey but it may be better to hire a third party to add credibility and accountability to the process.
2.2 Following communications survey, develop website as the best and most current source of news and photos on Canadian wake/ towed water sports	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The website should be the single best source of timely, relevant and captivating information on all wake/ towed water sports. The site could be updated to hold timely results, bios on national team members, photos, upcoming events, vital information on WSC. - Consider re-directing magazine resources into redesign and daily maintenance of association website. - Outsource redevelopment with support from WSC. - Use content management system to allow for more frequent updates by WSC from anywhere in the world - Seek quotes from Sue Dodge/Dodge Inc. and H3 Creative (both have sport and CMS expertise)
2.3 Develop an annual media guide with statistical information on national team members – this guide could be posted on the website.	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Outsource as part of website development. WSC could develop the content.
2.4 Develop a monthly on-line newsletter to be distributed to key stakeholders.	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This could be contracted out or managed by WSC
2.5 Invest in professional photography at national events and national team training camps to begin wake/ towed water sport photo library.	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Photos can also be used for sponsorship sales package. - Explore feasibility of having CP take photos at Pan Am Games and accessing COC photo library.
2.6 Provincial association component	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure that provincial associations are involved and consulted during the survey. - Ensure that provincial associations are aware of WSC programs and services. - Consider the development of a specific area within WSC website for provincial association news and updates. - Seek stories from provincial associations for newsletter content. - Include "Get Involved" section on website, overview of waterskiing at the provincial and local levels, how to join a club, how to start a club, how to incorporate program into existing outdoor programs and activities

Key strategy 2: deliver **new** methods of promotion and external communication for WSC and wake sports

ACTION ITEMS	PRIORITY	NOTES/RESPONSIBILITY
2.7 Consider producing glossy national team calendar incorporating all WSC disciplines for promotional and fundraising purposes.	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Talk to outside firm that has retail calendar experience regarding feasibility of the concept. - Talk to other sports with success stories in this area. - Potential great buy-in from national team members.
2.8 Develop promotional items (eg. Hang tag) that can be distributed through wake sport equipment retailers.	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use new logo and tagline. New way to educate the public re competitive side of wake sports.
2.9 Develop print ad that can be used in outdoor life and cottage life magazines.	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Same as above. Could use the same company that redesigns the website in order to ensure consistency in messaging and “look.”
2.10 Provincial association component	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure that provincial associations are provided with copies of articles and promotional items to help promote WSC messages. - Ensure that provincial associations are including WSC ads in their communications vehicles. - Develop video and print PSAs that provinces can distribute for local and regional promotion - Develop poster that provinces can distribute for local and regional promotion - Provide images of national team members to provinces for their promotional purposes. - Facilitate appearances of and demonstrations by national team members at local/regional promotional events

Objective 3: A substantial increase in the amount and quality of media coverage of WSC and wake sport disciplines at both the national and community levels.

Key strategy: plan and deliver consistent media relations programs

ACTION ITEMS	PRIORITY	NOTES/RESPONSIBILITY
3.1 Develop a comprehensive corporate media relations plan.	High (once branding exercise is completed)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Includes issues management plan, establishing association spokespeople, key messages for spokespeople, office procedures for dealing with media requests.
3.1.1 Develop issues management plan	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This plan would include a review of possible issues that may arise including doping infractions, selection disagreements, harassment, coaching conflicts and the WSC corporate image. - A detailed scenario is developed for each issue and presented to key staff. - Key spokespeople are briefed on the information so they are prepared in advance of an issue arising. - Outsource to communications professional. Estimated cost: \$2,000
3.1.2 Assign corporate spokespeople and ensure they are properly trained in media interviews	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Spokespeople include ED, President, Head coach and athlete rep - Media training can occur at Board or Executive meeting and would include mock interviews, a review of effective media relations and why organizations should be well prepared to handle media calls. - Outsource to communications professional. Estimated cost: one day session \$500 - \$1,000.
3.1.3 Develop key corporate messages	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Once the branding exercise is completed, WSC should develop a few key corporate messages and incorporate them into their daily communications. - These messages should be front and centre for all staff and key volunteers when dealing with media, public speaking and at meetings. - Messages should reflect WSC corporate philosophy and leave a lasting impression on those they are shared with. - Messages should be shared with provincial associations and encourage them to not only reflect these messages in their communications but also include them in their corporate communications activities. - WSC staff responsibility following branding exercise.
3.1.4 Develop office procedures on how to handle media requests		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop a media interview form that indicates type of media calls, time, date, reason for call. - Media calls should be returned within the hour. - Media should know and have access to key spokespeople. - Support staff should be well-versed on how to handle media calls. - WSC should have spokespeople who can handle calls in both official languages and also include a good representation from both men and women and in locations across the country. - Keep up-to-date listing of contact numbers (especially cell phones) of star national team athletes and their coaches so they are easily reached by the media. - WSC staff responsibility.

3.2 Ensure news media coverage of the top national team athletes.	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Outsource - CSN 	
3.2.1	Contract Louis Daignault/Canadian Sport News to write stories on national team athletes following national and international results.	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Current rate is \$200 for a bilingual story of approximately 350 words. This includes interviews with athletes following their performance, writing the article, emailing it directly to Canada's core media list (approximately 50 journalists), including Canadian Press and Presse canadienne. - Consider annual contract with CSN so that lower per story rate is applied for a volume discount. 30 stories (negotiable), pay half up front, plus overseas calls. - Train coaches and athletes to contact Louis directly following their performances. - Make sure Louis provides clear explanation of specific events and scoring. - Post CSN stories on website as quickly as possible. - CSN program can be coordinated by one key WSC staff person.
3.2.2	Solicit stories from provincial associations for publication in WSC newsletter to promote top national team athletes.	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This could also be posted on WSC website and used for the media guide.
3.2.3	Develop a brief "How to promote your provincial athletes" for your provincial associations.	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This brief item would include a sample bio, sample news release and a To-Do list for how to promote athletes with local and community papers and broadcast media.
3.2.4	Media tour	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Following a world record or championships, bring athlete to TO for a media tour with key reporters including the Star, the Sun, the Globe, Breakfast TV and Canada AM. - Athletes may even be able to do a demonstration for Canada AM weather man to help promote the sport. - Consider outsourcing to communications professional who has good contacts with Toronto media.
3.2.5	"Waterskiing/Wakesports at a Glance"	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop friendly, up-beat, one-page summary that explains technical side of sport including scoring, difficulty, techniques, differences between each event and discipline. Attach this summary to all corporate media releases. - WSC staff responsibility.
3.2.6	Head and shoulders photos	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure that up-to-date head and shoulders photos are widely used in association communications and available to the media. Conduct annual head and shoulders photo sessions. Make sure athletes are dry and coiffed, and wearing national team jacket for consistent, professional look. - Half-day session with photographer - \$500 depending on location.
3.2.7	Take advantage of Quebec media interest in amateur sport	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure that Quebec (esp. Montreal) media have good relationship with WSC and any current or up and coming Quebec area athletes and coaches. - Bilingual WSC staff or volunteer in conjunction with Quebec provincial association

3.3 Ensure news media coverage of all national championships.	High	- Outsource - CSN	
3.3.1	Contract Louis Daignault to write stories on national team athletes prior to and during the championships.	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure that Louis is contracted well in advance to ensure maximum coverage. - Cost – part of annual CSN contract per story. - Call CP sports desk (Neil Davidson) in Toronto to let him know that stories will be coming from Louis.
3.3.2	Solicit stories from organizing committee and its communications committee to help promote the event and the athletes.	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide information to Louis so he can incorporate as needed into his stories.
3.3.3	Local media calls and promotional activities	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure that local media are informed well in advance of national championships and provided with stats, bios, itinerary and contact information. - Determine how local media would like to receive results – fax, e-mail, or website. - Provide cell number of key contact person at nationals to all media. Make sure cell phone is on and working 18 hours a day. Ensure contact person has easy access to results and has good rapport with athletes and coaches. - May want to stage a media challenge or meet and greet with media.
3.3.4	Ensure effective on-site media relations	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - See Section 1.11
3.4	Use Major Games as an opportunity to enhance image of water skiing via proactive media plans/strategies.	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure that all national team members provide positive image of waterskiing during media encounters. - Improve quality of media servicing to ensure maximum coverage including briefing COC media attachés, producing annual media guide, timely updates to website, dynamic photos.
3.4.1	Contract Louis Daignault to write stories on national team athletes prior to and during the Major Games.	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure that Louis is contracted well in advance to ensure maximum coverage.
3.4.2	Ensure that all national team members provide positive image of waterskiing during media encounters.	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure that athletes are well-briefed and prepared to handle media interviews during the Games. - Ensure athletes know key messages.
3.4.3	Develop and distribute team protocol for dealing with media enquiries during games to internal staff.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure that athletes, coaches, support staff are aware of procedures.
3.4.4	Brief COC media attachés who will be coordinating media services at the Games.	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Call Helene Lapointe at COC to determine who the media attaché is. - Ensure WSC team captain understands the importance of proactive media relations and will assist with media interviews as required.

	3.4.5 Produce annual media guide	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Write and post an annual media guide in advance of season and distribute to key media. Louis would be able to let you know which media should be sent a copy (or emailed the link on the WSC website). - Cost: Will vary according to length, photography, printing, web design, etc.
	3.4.6 Timely updates to website	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure that WSC website is updated daily during the Games.
	3.4.7 Develop a media relations plan in the event of a medal	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Have athletes call WSC to provide flash quotes which will be posted on web site. - Send out media release and distribute nationally and to athlete's hometown and provincial association.
	3.4.8 Contact COC photographer regarding plans for waterski coverage during games		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Set aside funds to buy post-Games photos (Cost: CP is approximately \$40.00/photo for editorial use). - Make sure Canadian team photographer is on site on days when Canadians have strong medal chances. - Ensure that excellent medial podium shots are taken.
3.5	Stimulate feature stories in magazine, newspapers, radio and TV sports shows.	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CSN and WSC
	3.5.1 Contract Louis Daignault to write feature stories on national team athletes	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Once Louis gets to know the athletes, then he'll be better prepared to write feature stories for publication in feature magazine. - Supply high quality photos to go with the stories, if required. - CSN rate - \$200, depending on length
	3.5.2 Contact outdoor and travel magazines to gage interest and determine deadlines.	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - WSC staff
	3.5.3 Encourage provincial associations to write feature stories for local mediums.	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This can be a part of the "How to promote your sport" kit that lists a number of communications and public relations activities including effective media relations, interview techniques, how to increase visibility for your sport, media calls, etc.
	3.5.4 Develop relationship with Off the Record producers	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Encourage national team stars to appear on this popular athlete-opinion show
	3.5.5 Develop relationship with Coaching Review Magazine/Sheila Robertson	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Coaching Review always looking for new and different angles. Good vehicle to promote WSC within Canadian sport community, as well.
3.6	Ensure media training for athletes, coaches, key volunteers and staff, WSC spokespeople on an annual basis.	Low-Medium(will go up in priority as media interviews begin to increase)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Outside consultants - Not only practice interview techniques, but also emphasize the importance and reasons behind good media relations.

	3.6.1 Contract a professional media/communications expert to train key spokespeople	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This training could be provided at WSC Board or executive meetings. - Cost for 2 hour seminar is \$500 - One on one media training is tailored to the individual and could be done once the basic training is completed.
	3.6.2 Media training for athletes and coaches	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This could be done at their training camp and could include an overview of the importance of interviews, tips on how to prepare for media calls and how to promote yourself and your sport. - Cost: Outsource to communications professionals at \$1,000/day plus expenses.
3.7	As part of a comprehensive review, interview key amateur sport media regarding how to increase the profile of wake sports and WSC	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Outsource to communications experts
	3.7.1 Contract a professional media/communications expert to interview media as part of the comprehensive review.	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Journalists will provide invaluable insight into what kind of information they need to write stories on athletes. - Use the opportunity to educate the journalists about the sport.
3.8	Ensure news photo coverage of all national championships.	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Outsource to professional sport photographer who has a strong relationship with CP photos in Toronto
	3.8.1 Contract professional photographer to file photos to Canadian Press.	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure photographer is on the scene all day and files twice daily to CP. Make sure quality captions are sent along with the photos. Use same photos to post on website. Send photos to athletes' hometown and weekly newspapers. - Use this opportunity to take head and shoulders shots, overall event shots for corporate sales packages. Shots could also be used on posters, calendars, website design and other promotional material. - Greg Kinch Photography - Airfare - \$500 approximately - Accommodation – 120.00 per night - Meals – 40.00 per day - Film / Digital processing/ contact sheets – 10 rolls per day – \$350 per day - Digital fees – 825.00 digital camera rental for the week or 500.00 for week if Greg's new camera has arrived. - Fees – Set-up day - \$500, Competition day - \$700 per day, One travel day \$250
3.9	Provincial association component	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure that provincial associations are kept informed of WSC media and communications plans via newsletter. - Publish a media tips section in newsletter. - Distribute electronic media clippings and CSN stories to provinces - Work with provinces on developing regional media lists
	3.9.1 Ensure that provincial associations are kept informed of WSC media and communications plans.	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This can be done via newsletter.
	3.9.1 May want to publish a media tips section in newsletter.	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Media tips could include interview techniques, promoting stories with a local flavour, increasing visibility for water skiing and its athletes.

Objective 4: WSC is perceived as an important contributor by major water-sport related businesses and sport organizations

Key strategy: establish strategic alliances with key outdoor industries/businesses and targeted national sport federations

ACTION ITEMS	PRIORITY	NOTES/RESPONSIBILITY
4.1 Meet with key outdoor/recreational corporations to determine cross-promotional opportunities, sponsorship interest and to identify trends/mutual areas of interest.	Low	- Seek advice from marketing expert to add value to this action item.
4.2 Regularly communicate and promote wake /towed watersports in boating, outdoor, cottage and lifestyle publications.	Low	- Publish feature stories in targeted magazines with assistance from a professional writer.
4.3 Explore feasibility of strategic alliances with winter skiing sports – share success stories, compare challenges, and adopt best practices.	Medium	- WSC to meet with Alpine and Snowboarding
4.4 Explore interest from key outdoor industry leaders to participate and promote a National Wake Sport Week as a major event.	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - WSC with input and guidance from a marketing expert. This expert could package the property to help sell the concept. - This would need buy-in from provincial federations, as well as one major sponsor – could bridge some interesting gaps between competitive element of sport and leisure activity.
4.5 Improve communication with retailers as a valuable delivery network to help enhance and promote WSC image	Medium	- WSC with assistance from marketing expert – this would be identified as one component of a comprehensive marketing plan.

Objective 5: WSC is a respected leader within the sport community

Key Strategy: ensure WSC participates and contributes to the development of sport in Canada and is a respected member of the sport community

ACTION ITEMS	PRIORITY	NOTES/RESPONSIBILITY
5.1 Participate in Sport Matters meetings to ensure that the WSC voice is represented at the table.	Medium	- WSC
5.2 Participate in The Sport Policy Advisory Collective to influence sport policy development and position WSC as a contributor.	Medium	- WSC
5.3 Ensure that WSC positions itself as a leader and contributor in the development of sport to Sport Canada, the Secretary of State's office and other key government agencies.	Low	- WSC
5.4 Ensure that WSC is recognized as a leader that contributes to the successful promotion of wake sport/towed water sports by its provincial associations.	High	- WSC via its on-line newsletter, provision of services, hosting of national championships
5.5 Provincial association component	Medium	- Ensure that provincial associations are kept informed of WSC actions and leadership via newsletter updates. - Ensure that any areas that impact WSC are communicated to the provincial associations.

Objective 6: The successes of WSC members are recognized publicly and throughout the Canadian amateur sport community

Key strategy: recognize the accomplishments of WSC members through internal and external awards programs

ACTION ITEMS	PRIORITY	NOTES/RESPONSIBILITY
6.1 Regularly submit nominations for awards programs.	Medium	- WSC - Include Canadian Sport Awards, halls of fame, CAC awards, CAAWS awards, COC
6.2 Issue media releases to announce award winners.	Medium	- WSC
6.3 Review current internal awards program to include athletes with a disability, women, clubs, coaches.	Medium	- WSC
6.4 Send congratulatory letters from president/ED to organizing committees, award winners.	Integrate into regular office practices	- WSC
6.5 Increase communications with provincial associations	Medium	- Ensure that provincial associations are involved in the process by inviting nominations. - Work with provincial associations to hand out internal awards at local events

Objective 7: Members feel like they are part of a worthwhile, inclusive organization – the WSC “family”

Key Strategy: increase and improve communication with WSC members and stakeholders

ACTION ITEMS	PRIORITY	NOTES/RESPONSIBILITY
7.1 As part of a comprehensive communications survey, conduct electronic communications survey to solicit feedback from members.	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Post on WSC website, distribute through provincial membership lists. - Determine preferred method of communication for members, athletes, coaches. - Focus on magazine and website.
7.2 Ensure website includes electronic distribution list sign-up for updates and press releases.	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Send all information releases and website update notices to distribution list
7.3 Develop website to become key cornerstone of association information for members and stakeholders.	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - As discussed above in section
7.4 Depending on results of communications survey, develop bi-monthly electronic newsletter for members	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Outsource design that WSC can maintain every two months
7.5 WSC key staff and volunteers speak at provincial meetings/AGMs	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - WSC
7.6 Provincial association component	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure that provincial associations are kept informed of the survey process and results Consult with a few prior to restructuring your existing communications materials. - Hold meetings of provincial association executive directors at AGM/board meetings to focus on common issues and improving communications.

Objective 8: National team members who support and contribute to WSC promotional efforts

Key strategy: ensure that mutually beneficial, strong relationships exist between WSC and national team members

ACTION ITEMS	PRIORITY	NOTES/RESPONSIBILITY
8.1 Develop and distribute bi-monthly national team newsletter.	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - WSC – content more important than design - WSC as part of the other newsletter but a few pages can be targeted specifically to national team members. - Include relevant press clippings.
8.2 Review athlete agreement and adjust (compare to other sports).	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - WSC – consult skiing athlete agreements - Need to enforce athletes' rights and obligations if WSC wants to be taken seriously. Ensure that athletes are involved in the deliberations to avoid backlash (perhaps involve AthletesCAN).
8.3 Present athlete agreement in detail at national team meetings so that everyone understands their promotional obligations to WSC	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - WSC
8.4 Develop strong relationships with athletes' agents	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - WSC - Send media clippings to athletes' agents
8.5 Send congratulatory letters to athletes and their coaches from president to recognize record breakers, international medal winners	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - WSC – relatively easy to initiate
8.6 Provincial association component	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure that provincial associations are kept informed about athletes performances. - Send notes to the provincial associations when their athletes win medals, break records, etc.

Objective 9: National championships that are run “professionally” and enhance the profile of WSC

Key Strategy 1: improve the presentation of national events to make them more appealing, entertaining, and easy to understand for spectators and television

ACTION ITEMS	PRIORITY	NOTES/RESPONSIBILITY
9.1 Develop a specific communications plan for each major WSC event which outlines responsibilities and activities for media relations, promotions & publicity, sponsor servicing, announcing, presentation.	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This could be outsourced. - This plan would eventually be included in the hosting manual. - Plan should identify WSC, provincial association and host organizing committee responsibilities
9.2 Conduct a thorough review of national championships to ensure that they offer the media and spectators an inviting and appealing event to attend.	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Internal or outsource to communications experts who have an understanding of national events and what makes them successful.
9.3 Standardize key aspects of WSC championships so that a consistent image is delivered regardless of host city, facility or organizing committee.	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Signage (mainly), awards, colourful and informative announcing
9.4 Restructure bidding process/entry fee structure so that national championships are profitable for WSC and organizing committee.	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - WSC with input and buy-in from provincial associations. Talk to other sports regarding this issue.
9.5 Enhance presentation-side of championships	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Announcing, music, large video screen presence, post-race athlete interviews to the crowd, crowd prizes and contests, VIP/sponsor lounges.
9.6 Provincial association component	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure that WSC works with the provincial association to coordinate the best possible championships. - Set-up communications guidelines and principles well in advance of competitions. - Have regular conference calls and email updates to ensure everyone is in the loop. - Include provincial association in approval process for printed material and media releases, as required.

Key Strategy 2: increase the amount and quality of media coverage of national championships to ensure maximum coverage at both the community and national level

ACTION ITEMS	PRIORITY	NOTES/RESPONSIBILITY
9.7 Provoke media interest in championships	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - WSC with organizing committee/ provincial association - Examples - Media tour with star athletes instead of pre-meet press conference, entice breakfast television host to broadcast from location
9.7.1 Send out warm-up media releases 1-3 months and one week prior to the competition.	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Topics could include: announcing the city and location of the event, stars expected to attend, selection aspect of championships, sponsorship announcements - WSC in conjunction with org. committee and provincial association
9.7.2 Pre-meet competition media tour	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Instead of press conference, organize a tour with star athletes. Work with organizing committee rep who knows the local media. WSC arranges for 1-3 star athlete(s) to go on tour, org. comm. rep. sets up tour. Bring press kits to hand out, which would include relevant stats, athlete bios, competition schedule, background information on WSC and other important information.
9.7.3 Work with org committee re acquiring local radio sponsor	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Offer preferred seating, in-depth interviews with NT athletes and promotional opportunities in exchange for ad time/announcer promos on radio
9.7.4 Giveaways	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Send event admission tickets and waterskiing related merchandise to local radio stations for giveaways to listeners. - WSC staff in conjunction with org. comm.
9.7.5 Host media event/educational clinic day before competition.	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Arrange for top athletes to give clinic to local kids and invite media to attend or - Invite media to come out, try the sport and receive tips from top NT members or ride in the ski boat during practice sessions. - WSC in conjunction with org. comm.
9.7.6 Encourage breakfast television host/local tv weather forecasters to broadcast from competition	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use org. comm. rep. contacts to encourage local "colourful" tv personalities to broadcast from the event.
9.8 Improve quality of media servicing on-site	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - WSC with organizing committee/ provincial association and support from CSN: - Examples - Immediate results distribution, easy access to athletes and coaches for interviews, on-site WSC media liaison who can EDUCATE first-time media. - Seek media sponsors/partners for event
9.8.1 Develop detailed media relations and media servicing plan	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Work in conjunction with organizing committee and provincial association - WSC staff responsibility to lead and execute the plan. - Should include dates of media releases, pre-meet media opportunities, media services set-up and tear-down, roles and responsibilities
9.8.2 Produce media kits for championships	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Include athlete profiles (with head and shoulder shots), order of events, records and rankings, sport backgrounder, contact numbers of key contact person, info on upcoming events, recent CSN stories, championship souvenir program, entry lists. - WSC to put together with local information to be sent by org. comm.

9.8.3	Ensure professional looking media accreditation	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - For TV crew as well - Org. comm. responsibility - Have media go online to initiate accreditation process.
9.8.4	Bring and use walkie-talkies for WSC/media services staff	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensures that media (and sponsor) needs are fulfilled as quickly as possible. - Ensures that athletes and coaches do minimal walking.
9.8.5	Arrange for media seating in stands	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - As close to the action/best view possible so that the media can be drawn in to and impressed by the sport. - WSC with org. comm..
9.8.6	Arrange for well-equipped media room	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 2-3 phone lines, photocopy, computer printer, results. - WSC with org. comm..
9.8.7	Arrange for refreshments for media	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Well-watered and well-fed media tend to write more upbeat, positive stories. - WSC with org. comm.
9.8.8	Respond to on-site media interview and information requests as quickly as possible	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Key media contact should be someone who knows the sport at all levels really well and enjoys educating people about the sport. Understands the importance of media deadlines.
9.8.9	Post and copy local newspaper clippings	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Post clippings in media room and in athlete areas, bring photocopies home for files and sponsor follow-up. - WSC with org. comm.
9.8.10	Fill out and distribute daily results chart	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Very helpful for media who arrive in the middle of the competition. - WSC with media room volunteers.
9.8.11	For selection competitions, update team nominees and distribute daily	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Always a key angle for the media. Good for crowd interest too. - WSC with media room volunteers.
9.8.12	Arrange for thank-you shirts for media/media room volunteers	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This ensures that media and volunteers will return to another one of your events. Also allows for post-meet advertising whenever they wear the shirt. - WSC with org. comm.
9.9	Provide pro-active service to media off-site	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - WSC with organizing committee/ provincial association - Results and national story sent out by Canadian Press immediately after finals (CSN) – same story can be posted on WSC website - Consider hiring freelance photographer to file news photos to Canadian Press and hometown newspapers (Greg Kinch) - Targeted stories and flash quotes to athletes' hometown - Website with timely results, media releases, photos
9.9.1	Arrange for CSN coverage	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establish key on-site contact for Louis. Key contact decides on national story each night and gets top performers on cell phone to Louis as soon as possible. - If results are not being immediately posted to a website, fax them to Louis as competition takes place throughout the day. - This ensures that final results and one national story are transmitted on CP/PC each day.

9.9.2	Set up and deliver hometown newspaper program	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Set up flash quote team of volunteers, get quotes from gold medallists after they compete, write short flash quote stories, e-mail stories to hometown newspapers. - Post flash quotes on website, distribute to media on-site. - WSC with org. comm..
9.9.3	Send results by e-mail or fax (as required) to local media who are unable to cover the competition on-site	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - WSC work with org. comm. to ensure that this happens.
9.9.4	Work with org. committee to set up championship mini-website		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Post results as quickly as possible, post CSN stories, promote upcoming major events or launch Team Canada website, especially if championships are a selection competition, eg. Launch 2003 Canadian Pan American Games Team website.
9.9.5	Send photos of gold medallists in action and any unique high quality action photos to Canadian Press	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - An expensive venture but worth the investment. See 1.4.8.

Objective 10: Develop a comprehensive marketing plan

Key Strategy: position wake sports as a valuable property for sponsorship

ACTION ITEMS	PRIORITY	NOTES/RESPONSIBILITY
10.1 Development of a comprehensive marketing plan that will include a detailed sponsorship package, identify potential corporations, an internal review of current WSC programs and services and identify possible new properties.	High	- Suggested marketing consultant – Lawrence Baslaw
10.2 Explore interest from CBC to produce and air national championships	High	- Communications consultants can explore initial interest and WSC can follow-up if CBC gives green light.
10.3 Review current TV production to ensure it meets needs of WSC and offers maximum benefits for the visibility and enhanced profile of the sport.	High	- Communications consultants
10.4 Ensure that sponsor servicing meets the needs of current sponsors by soliciting feedback on a regular basis (part of a comprehensive review with key stakeholders).	Medium	- Communications consultants or independent third party could conduct the review.
10.5 Develop and promote the national team as a valuable property that promotes and enhances the image of WSC.	High	- Communications and Marketing consultant would prepare a detailed action plan.
10.6 Review current sponsorship benefits to ensure maximum return for sponsors.	High	- Marketing consultant – Lawrence Baslaw
10.7 Regularly communicate with WSC sponsors and schedule regular meetings to ensure sponsor satisfaction.	Medium	- WSC
10.8 Integrate national team members into sponsors' promotional events – i.e. guest appearances, public speaking, demonstrations, career opportunities, etc.	Low	- WSC

Objective 11: Ensure all properties enhance the image of WSC

Key Strategy: Deliver exciting, cutting-edge properties for sale and sponsorship

ACTION ITEMS	PRIORITY	NOTES/RESPONSIBILITY
11.1 Review current properties and determine opportunities for the development and sale of innovative programs.	High	- Part of the Marketing Plan
11.2 Explore the feasibility of marketing a WSC calendar featuring national team athletes.	Medium	- Part of Marketing Plan - This fundraising initiative has proven successful with other sports.
11.3 Investigate the possibility of involving alumni to tap into fundraising initiatives, donations, additional resources.	Low	- WSC - This could be done via the on-line newsletter.
11.4 Ensure national championships are a source of revenue for WSC	High	- WSC, Marketing and communications consultants - This is WSC primary source of potential revenue and could be managed in such a way to maximize revenue, increase visibility and profile for WSC and its sponsors and begin to reach Canadians. WSC may want to review the feasibility of managing the championships.
11.5 Review marketing practices at the provincial associations to ensure that they meet the WSC guidelines.	Medium	- The provincial associations should be given guidelines by WSC to ensure that its brand is being promoted as widely as possible.

Objective 12: Introduce wake sports to various corporations

Key Strategy: Explore new and different segments of water sport related industries and other corporations for partnerships and sponsorship

ACTION ITEMS	PRIORITY	NOTES/RESPONSIBILITY
12.1 Implement marketing plan by meeting with targeted water sport related corporations.	High	- Part of the Marketing Plan
12.2 Promote WSC at trade-shows, outdoor and cottage venues, recreational camps, boat shows and water safety association.	Medium	- Part of Marketing Plan - This fundraising initiative has proven successful with other sports.
12.3 Explore the interest of non water sport industry corporation	Medium	- Part of Marketing Plan