COMMUNICATION FOR THE THIRD SECTOR

COMMUNICATING IN A NEW REALITY

SAYU
CONSULTING

01

A CONTEXT OF CHALLENGES

WHAT ARE THE CHALLENGES FOR THIRD SECTOR?

A dynamic and highly competitive environment – regarding the distribution of resources and fundraising – creates challenges for the operation and viability of non-profit organizations, given the specific nature of their activities.

Among the global challenges that can be generalized to most of these organizations are:

1. Lack of Resources

Ensuring sufficient and continuous funding to operate effectively is one of the main challenges for any non-profit organization. The ability to mobilize donor require volunteers in an environment of enormous difficulties and potential intervention areas requires the organization to consolidate visibility and reputation and try to remain top-of-mind for its audience.

2. Lack of Strategic Planning

Many non-profit organizations still suffer from the absence of a cohesive and structured strategic plan that facilitates success in the activities they develop and the realization of their mission. This deficit makes it impossible to design a long-term solution and the support needed to achieve it.

3. Lack of Networking

A deficient or disorganized support network and networking is another significant challenge, as it can lead to duplicated efforts, inefficiency in terms of time, the creation of conflicting strategies, and the inability to learn from experience. The more non-profit organizations share and communicate with each other and with the community in general, the more effective they will be.

4. Limited Capacity

It can be difficult for a non-profit organization to possess all the technical and operational capacities needed to implement and fulfill its mission and to invest in the training of its team. This weak response capacity affects fundraising ability, leadership perception, and the development of proposed technical areas.

5. Development Approaches

Some non-profit organizations may prefer a "hardware" approach, focused on infrastructure construction and service provision, rather than a focus on the empowerment of people and institutions. In general, this type of development approach is not as flexible, sustainable, and relevant to the community as a broader approach could be.

WHAT WAS THE REALITY PRE-COVID-19?

The reality of the NGO ecosystem in Portugal in 2019 can be summarized based on some relevant figures:

- There are a total of 5,622 private social solidarity institutions in Portugal, according to data from the INE. These represent 43% of the annual gross value generated by the social economy.
- The value of wages paid in the social economy amounts to 3.8 million euros, which represents 5.2% of the national economy.
- There are 389 Misericórdias in Portugal.
- Associations with altruistic purposes are the largest group in the social economy (57,196), followed by cooperatives (2,117).

What was the impact of the pandemic?

The repercussions of the health crisis caused by the Covid-19 pandemic in economic terms are gradually becoming evident, highlighting the subsequent social crisis we are currently experiencing in the country. The reduction in production, the contraction of business volume, and the reduction in employment are examples of the harmful consequences of the pandemic.

More than just a public health situation caused by the pandemic, there is widespread concern about the risk of worsening social inequalities due to the deterioration of the labour market, the increase in unemployment, and the lack of social protection.

What support was there in response to the pandemic?

Perante uma situação de crise como a que experienciámos recentemente, tornou-se notória uma mobilização da sociedade para responder a desafios e riscos sem precedentes:

- Over 35 million euros raised by May, a figure that continues to increase.
- More than 33% (11 million euros) of the donations were aimed at purchasing ventilators for health institutions.
- Nearly 2.6 million euros (7.34%) for the protection of frontline workers.

- Almost 1.3 million euros (3.65%) to support needy families.
- Nearly 6 million euros (36.3%) were made available by Portuguese foundations; 281,000 euros (1.7%) were donated by individuals.

What future can we expect?

With the response to Covid-19, the capacity of non-profit organizations to remain relevant and provide the necessary assistance is subject to four key factors: (a) their presence on the ground and their operational footprint, (b) adaptation to new norms and measures imposed, (c) access to flexible financing, and (d) the ability to obtain relevant materials to respond to the pandemic.

1. Presence on the ground and operational footprint

Local actors, including NGOs, government, and the private sector, are critical for all operations in response to this crisis, especially in the current context shaped by uncertainty and the attempt to respond to Covid-19.

2. Adaptation to norms and measures imposed

The measures implemented to contain and mitigate the virus may inadvertently introduce additional obstacles to the work of organizations. The activity of non-profit organizations may be affected by these restrictions unless they have the capacity to reorganize and adapt to new circumstances and consider the possibility of maintaining and expanding their operations.

3. Access to flexible financing

The maintenance and expansion of organizations' activities depend on the availability of flexible financing. Commitment to good financing practices – including timely, predictable, and flexible funding – is essential to enable humanitarian partners to respond quickly and effectively. This is especially true for Covid-19, where challenges are new and unpredictable in response to a truly global crisis.

QUAL ERA A REALIDADE PRÉ COVID-19?

4. Capacity to Acquire Resources
The ability to acquire and import, when necessary, protective equipment, medical supplements, and medications to effectively respond to the pandemic is crucial. However, concerns about supply are not only related to the impact of the disease. The indirect effect on existing pre-emergency states can be equally devastating for extremely vulnerable populations.

The challenges posed by the pandemic have led organizations within the Third Sector to plan new responses for communities that are already naturally more exposed and weakened, as well as rethink how the sector operates in a time of greater pressure on available resources.

With the changes brought about by the Covid-19 pandemic, the focus of non-profit organizations needs to be adjusted to respond to increased needs. This demand requires an immense capacity for flexibility as parameters and action structures evolve in a scenario of uncertainty.

The implications for organizational resilience in this context are critical, requiring a broad approach to scale interventions, address financial and operational risks, and ensure liquidity in a scenario of economic downturn and resource dispersion.
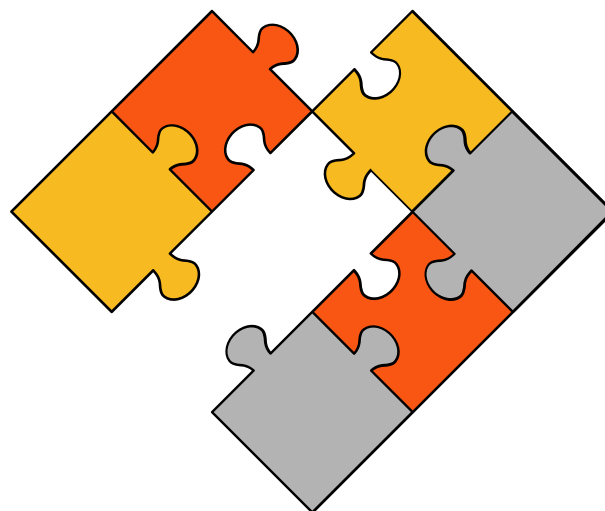
02

HOW TO TELL RELEVANT AND PURPOSE STORIES?

HOW IMPORTANT IS BRANDING?

1. Branding forms the foundation of all marketing efforts...

2. A connection with the audience that shares the same values, creating the conditions for a long-term sustainable relationship.

3. From a business perspective, it is "the security of future results."

Because nowadays the public seeks experiences, not just services or products that fulfill their functionality, branding helps in defining the "promise and delivering an experience."

A strong brand is a valuable brand. It builds loyalty and creates a desire for recommendation. A loyal audience means a greater ability to achieve the proposed mission**.**

What is a brand? It is not what we define it as. It is what they feel it is. What they say it is.

Brands are defined by individuals/people, not by organizations or markets. People are emotional and intuitive beings. We are always talking about **relationships!**

A brand is a mix of attributes, both tangible and intangible, symbolized by a trademark that, when managed effectively, creates **value** and influences decisions.

A brand is not a logo, a brand is not a product. A brand is what evokes emotions in us. In other words... it's not what "we" say it is... It's what "they" feel and say it is!

- The brand enables recognition: It is through the brand that an organization obtains recognition and becomes known in the market.

- Branding leverages commercial value: A strongly established brand can increase the value of the organization and become an increased investment factor.

- Branding generates new customers: strong brands generally mean that there is a positive impression of the organization with the public and enhances the reliability generated by recognition.

- Improves pride and satisfaction among employees and partners.

What is the difference between positioning and differentiation?

You cannot tell a story without talking about differentiation and positioning.

- **Positioning:** It is concentrating on a single idea – or just one word – the definition of the organization in the minds of consumers.

- **Differentiation:** Creating or demonstrating unique characteristics in an organization's products or brands, compared to its competition.

"They"...
- They have too many options and not enough time.
- They tend to highlight and notice only what is different or adds value.
- Most perceive that the offer has similar qualities and attributes. It is the relationship ("difference") that leads to choice.

To **position** and **differentiate** you need to answer the following questions simply:
- Who or what is xpto?
- What does xpto do?
- Why is it relevant to "Them"?

WHAT IS YOUR STORY? TELL AN ATTRACTIVE, EXCITING AND CONVINCING STORY.

Telling an engaging, exciting, and convincing story will be as important today as it has always been.

A well-told, great story still makes a difference.

The only unchanging truth is that the story behind organizations, industries, and sectors is crucial. It is the instigator for change, the record of progress, and the difference between participating and truly racing to win.

How to tell your story?

1. Know your audience.
Who wants to hear your story? Who will benefit from it and respond to it? To create a compelling story, you need to understand your audience and who will engage with it.

2. Define your main message.
Independentemente da dimensão da sua história, quer esta tenha uma página ou vinte, dure dez minutos ou sessenta, esta deve ter uma mensagem central. Tal como a fundação de uma casa, esta deve ser estabelecida antes de avançar.

3. Decide what type of story you're telling.
Not all stories are the same. To determine what type of story you're telling, figure out how you want your audience to feel or react as they engage with it.

4. Establish your call to action.
Your goal and call to action (CTA) are similar, but your CTA defines the action you want your audience to take after hearing your message.

5. Choose the medium to tell it.
Stories can take various forms. Some stories are read, some are viewed, and others are heard. The medium chosen depends on the type of story and the available resources, such as time, capital, or team.

6. Share your story.
Don't forget to share and promote your story! Just like with any other content, creating it is only half the battle—sharing is the other half.

How to create your script?

In summary, and as a final note for telling your story, you should be able to answer some questions:

1. What value motivates your brand?

2. What are your corporate values?

3. What are your beliefs regarding the industry?

4. If you could be the best at one aspect of your business, what would you choose?

5. What makes your organization great?

6. Where do you expect to see your organization in 5 years?

7. If you had to describe your organization in one word, what would it be? Why?

8. How would you like your organization to be known?

9. What problem does your solution solve?

03

HOW TO CALL ATTENTION OF JOURNALISTS AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS?

WHAT IS THE RELEVANCE OF SEGMENTATION?

Just as it is important for your audience to know your brand and what it represents, it is equally important that, when communicating to a specific audience, you understand their particularities, concerns, interests, and what drives their decisions. Only then will it be possible to create an oriented and effective communication strategy.

1. Identify communication opportunities.
Segmentation allows you to identify dissemination opportunities, adjusting communication actions to the current media agenda and the topics that stand out at that moment.

2.Plan the communication.
Organizations can develop campaigns based on a clearer idea of the effort required to reach a specific audience segment and the response they can expect.

3. Select channels.
Segmenting the audience helps select dissemination channels more intelligently and allocate resources for an effective strategy in each one.

4. Define timings.
Understanding the audience enables you to define the timing of promotional efforts, placing greater emphasis on certain actions when it is likely to obtain a higher response.

5. Maximize resources.
By adapting the marketing plan to audience segments, it becomes possible to manage available resources more effectively, whether they are material or voluntary resources, avoiding their dispersion in broader, but less efficient actions.

HOW TO IDENTIFY THE TARGET AUDIENCE?

Defining an **organization's target audience** is a fundamental first step in communicating a message effectively. It is the foundation of every marketing strategy, from the way we present our purpose and actions to the channels selected to publicize it.

An organization's target audience is not "everyone". The challenge is to be able to select and understand a particular segment of the public so that it is possible to communicate effectively to them, addressing all their needs.

The better we decode the target audience, the easier it becomes to reach them – with relevant messages, content and campaigns. As the understanding of the audience grows, it becomes possible to ensure higher conversion rates and increased results for the actions implemented.

STAKEHOLDERS

**internal stakeholders:** are generally members of the organization.

- Management
- Staff
- Volunteers

Primary stakeholders: are those who have a direct relationship with the organization and who benefit from its activity. Primary stakeholders: are those who have a direct relationship with the organization and who benefit from its activity.

- Beneficiaries
- Donors

External stakeholders: are those who are not directly linked to the organization. They will, however, have an interest in the organization's activities or may be impacted by its activities.

- Community in general
- Experts and Academic Institutions
- Local Living Forces
- Lobbies
- Media
- Public Sector
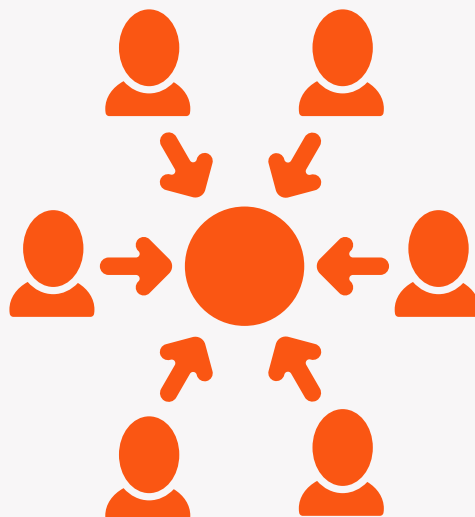
HOW TO BOOST YOUR MEDIA COVERAGE?

1. **Visibility and reputation for the brand.**
2. **Collection of donations.**
3. **Foster the interest of partners.**
4. **Creation of the team – management, staff and volunteers.**

HOW TO COMMUNICATE THROUGH THE MEDIA?

Social media organizations emerge as platforms par excellence for disseminating information in an amplified way and reaching a wide range of audiences.

Creating communication actions aimed at the media thus reinforces the relevance of the intervention to be carried out and the sharing of knowledge around it.

1. Setting a Media Agenda.
Let's start by thinking about which themes associated with the organization's activity may be relevant to the media. The first step (and the biggest challenge) is to find a noteworthy topic to promote in this context. For new projects, this could be their launch, or information related to fundraising, an important milestone in the organization's history, a major upcoming event, or a new support campaign.

2. Contact individual journalists.
You can also identify and work with specific journalists to promote the story you have to tell. This strategy can work particularly well if the objective is a more in-depth piece such as an interview, or if we want to establish regular contact with journalists who can address future moments of promoting the brand.

3. Associate with current stories.
It's a risky move, but it can help generate extra attention for the brand. There are a few different ways we associate ourselves with a news story in the media, but they all share a common purpose: taking advantage of the popularity of an existing story for their own benefit. You can, for example, share your organization's view on a certain topic or take action in line with or against a mentioned action. This type of position taking can guarantee you a space in the discussion to be held.

4. Participate in initiatives with visibility.
Keep an eye out for initiatives that attract media attention and involve your organization in them. For example, you might join a webinar as a speaker in your area of expertise or look to join their team on a pre-existing campaign.

5. Invest in a content strategy.
Many journalists and publications look to social media as a source of material and inspiration. You have a greater chance of standing out if you post content regularly as part of a content marketing strategy and approach influencers and industry professionals to grow your follower base. This can be the springboard to guarantee a comment space, as a reliable and relevant source, for someone responsible for the organization.

04

HOW TO COMMUNICATE IN THE POST PANDEMIC PERIOD?

HOW TO MANAGE AN ENVIRONMENT OF NOISE AND DISINFORMATION?

The World Health Organization (WHO) has warned of "an overabundance of information - some accurate and some not - that makes it difficult to find reliable sources". This is a distinction that sets the coronavirus apart from previous viral outbreaks. While SARS, MERS, and Zika have caused global panic, fears surrounding the coronavirus have been especially amplified by social media. These platforms have allowed misinformation to spread and grow at unprecedented speed, creating an environment of uncertainty that has fueled anxiety.

The WHO attempted to address the issue by partnering with Twitter, Facebook, Tencent and TikTok to suppress misinformation. It recently launched a Google SOS alert to push the information it shares to the top of search results for coronavirus-related searches.

The company also works with Facebook to reach specific populations and demographics with ads that provide important health information. He has gone so far as to interact with influencers in Asia to try and keep misinformation at bay.

Social media platforms have undertaken their own efforts. TikTok attempted to remove purposefully misleading videos, saying in a statement that it "would not allow misinformation that could cause harm to its community or the general public." Facebook has also worked to remove posts with dubious health advice, and WeChat owner Tencent has used its costume-checking platform to evaluate coronavirus rumors circulating online.

WHAT IS THE INITIAL RESPONSE TO THE CRISIS?

Dealing with the shock caused by the Covid-19 pandemic has focused, in the short term, on readjusting campaigns and targeting communication efforts to manage the crisis immediately. After these initial measures, strategies were aimed at monitoring specific needs associated with confinement, with new actions aimed at being present and visible, informing about the interventions carried out, determining new support protocols and evaluating future actions.

WHICH COMMUNICATION AXES TO ADDRESS?

Regardless of the specific goals a marketing strategy aims to achieve, the vast majority of campaigns fall into one of four categories:

1. Traditional fundraising asks the public to make a monetary donation to a charitable cause or campaign. It requires teaching consumers to care about the problem the organization seeks to solve. Fundraising initiatives can be targeted at individuals or organizations.

2. Consumer-facing actions are partnerships with a brand designed to encourage consumers to use their purchasing power to help charitable organizations. This often takes the form of "cause marketing," in which consumers purchase products because part of the purchase price will be donated to a specific cause or nonprofit organization.

3.Message-focused campaigns seek to raise awareness, encourage political change, or affect consumer behavior. These campaigns can be focused on individual groups or more broadly on the general public, and can be linked to current high-media initiatives. They are often combined with or followed by specific fundraising or voluntary sign-up campaigns to take advantage of the momentary surge in attention and concern among the public.

4. **Event marketing** is not necessarily thought of as a mass in-person event – it focuses on a single promotional event, through which donations are directly raised or where the cost of admission goes directly to the non-profit organization. These marketing initiatives often combine the organization's message with the prestige of a guest public figure, whose media profile and professional connections are used to promote the initiative's visibility.

WHAT ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN POST-COVID-19?

1. Monitor the context.
In a context of uncertainty like this, analyzing the new context becomes a fundamental step to detect new dynamics and identify new needs caused by this situation. It becomes important to explore what is happening inside and outside the organization with the help of control mechanisms. Regarding the relationship with donors and volunteers, it is critical to evaluate the resources that can be counted on, counting donations, presence in initiatives, active members, support received and identified requests for support. Understanding where we start from and what tools are at our disposal is the first step towards creating an effective action strategy.

2. Analyze public behavior.
The big question we are faced with is how the public will behave in this "new normal". Any action must be planned with extreme care, since even organizations and entities that are more advanced in this response process are still in the early stages of recovering their activity and adapting. This is therefore a crucial time to re-evaluate your volunteer and membership base and consider reaching new segments of the public. In many cases, this crisis is guiding the perception towards the various actors in society. Despite this, according to the Edelman Trust Barometer 2020 global report, NGOs still lead the public's perception of demonstrating ethical behavior, supplanting the private sector, public sector and the media.

3. Formulate new messages.
Brands must dedicate themselves to creating useful content for their audience, adapting their message to the new reality through multiple formats: blog posts, social media profiles, video content, etc. In fact, a new focus has been detected in the types of images used on social media. A study by Pattern89 analyzed the activity of 1,100 brands on social media platforms and concludes that there are 27% fewer photos and videos showing physical proximity between individuals.

4. Rethink channels.
Changing public habits have revolutionized the marketing strategies planned for this year. According to a survey carried out by GlobalWebIndex, during the period of confinement among the activities in which the public spent the most time were news, generally using a smart TV (67%), watching audiovisual content through streaming platforms (45 %) and, of course, the use of social media (45%). This is the time to readjust budgets, calculate estimates and plan the implementation of communication actions, with online advertising playing an essential role in reactivating contact after Covid-19.

5. Customize the relationship.
People donate to a particular cause because of an emotional response to it. It's something personal, so the message to communicate with the public must also have a personal character. To differentiate ourselves in an environment of "noise" and encourage the public to take action, we need to understand what they are looking for in the relationship they establish with an organization and segment the interaction. This requires defining profiles, creating relevant content and using the right platforms to enable the message to reach its recipient. If the organization organizes several initiatives, runs multiple campaigns, shares a lot of information and data or provides regular updates, it is useful to try to direct them to the target on which it will have the most impact.

WHAT ARE THE CHANNELS FOR AN EFFECTIVE STRATEGY?

Nonprofits can take advantage of many of the same marketing platforms that businesses use, the main difference being that nonprofits generally have a smaller budget and must adopt a clear strategic positioning about how they reach out to donors, partners and volunteers and how they publicize their activity.

1. Social Media.
Platforms such as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram can be used to share relevant information, maintain contact with the public and publicize initiatives and campaigns to be carried out.

2. Online advertising.
Taking advantage of online tools like Google Ads allows you to implement targeted campaigns with controlled and reduced costs.

3. SEO Optimization.
Using an SEO strategy makes it possible to direct visitors to the organization's website, the ideal space to encourage them to become volunteers, donate or sign up to receive news and updates on the activity carried out.

4.Partnerships.
Corporate and celebrity/influencer partnerships allow an organization to leverage an existing brand's recognition and reputation and another organization's network to boost its visibility and increase audience engagement in specific campaigns.

5. Email Marketing.
Using an email sending platform makes it easier to regularly contact more people, publicize initiatives, encourage engagement and share success stories.

6. PR.
Just like companies, non-profit organizations can also use public relations campaigns to "spread the word" about their work, as well as establish their authority as a source of information about the sector and credibility with the public.

7. Webinars.
Holding free online seminars allows you to educate volunteers, launch fundraising campaigns with potential donors and answer questions about the work carried out and the cause defended, increasing the transparency of processes and actions.
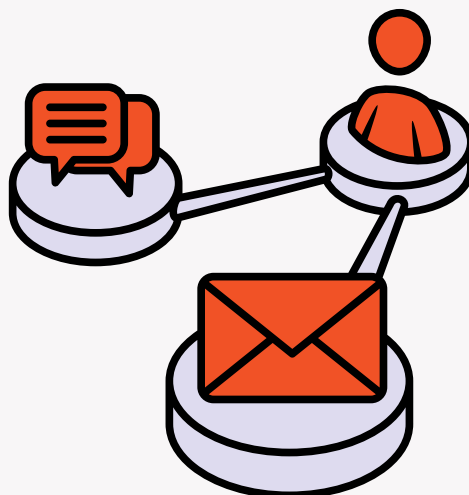
WHAT SHOULD BE THE RESPONSE TO A CRISIS SITUATION?

Crises put a company's preparedness and response capacity to the test, testing its modus operandi, mission, vision, values, culture and reputation.

A context of transformation:

- **Evolution of social networks** - Technology, globalization and instantaneity of the internet and social networks influence NGO communication.

- **Media coverage -** Media with greater reach, influence and proximity through new channels.

- **Sociological changes -** Evolution of citizenship standards and principles of social responsibility.

- **Greater training -** People must know how to act in the face of threat and adversity scenarios. The present context leads to the need to prepare organizations for events that could compromise their continuity and that require preparation, consideration and planning » Crisis Management Plan.

The context of the present leads to the need to prepare organizations for events that may compromise their continuity and that require preparation, consideration and planning **» Crisis Management Plan.**

Communication in crisis. What to do?

- Definition of primary source to ensure that information is disseminated accurately and timely to relevant audiences.

- Point out where and when to distribute information related to the crisis.

- It is important for the organization to maintain a single voice, having consistent communications and messaging only from approved spokespersons.

- The approach must be aligned with predefined values and code of conduct. · Having and maintaining clear and consistent messaging throughout the process is vital.

- Craft the organization's official message - what we are doing, what we are going to do.

- Define for whom – media, social networks, Beneficiaries, Donors, Volunteers, Collaborators, other Stakeholders – and how – action plan for each audience with adjustment of the message.

WHAT SHOULD BE THE RESPONSE TO A CRISIS SITUATION?

How to communicate to the media?

- Secure accurate information to the organization's designated spokespersons.

- Prevent premature or unauthorized dissemination of information. · Establish the strategy, rules and procedures for dealing with the media.

- Provide briefings and updates to local media - in the areas where we have projects. · Express the positive side of the efforts the organization is making.

- Prepare a communication for generalist national media, reporting on the action carried out and the needs identified. · Instruments: statements to the media, questions and answers (Q&A), Press Releases.

How to communicate outside the organization (donors, beneficiaries and other relevant stakeholders)?

- Prepare mailing for the organization's database, stating what we propose to do and what we need to carry out our mission.

- Give a factual account of the situation: Wherever possible, provide a factual view of the situation – what is happening and how the organization is involved.

- Prepare fundraising campaigns – income tax allocation campaign, for example.

- Prepare an influencer campaign that draws attention to our mission and what we need to achieve it.

How to communicate within the organization (employees and volunteers)?

Empower work teams with the information needed to deal with the problem. This includes details of our approach to media, what to say, who to contact or escalate concerns.

- Strengthen our processes so that, in the event of a potential crisis, we know how to act.

How to get in touch?

📞 21 192 6120

✉️ letus@say-u.pt

🌐 www.say-u.pt