



**31st**  
**IASP** WORLD  
CONFERENCE

QNCC | 19th – 22nd October

**BRINGING YOUR PARK TO MARKET: MARKETING  
AND BRANDING STRATEGIES FOR STPs**

**PARALLEL SESSION 7**

Marketing and communication:  
Attracting companies. Seducing stakeholders

Author:

**Soledad Díaz**, Spain

Managing Director

Association of Science and Technology Parks of Spain  
(APTE)

*SUBTHEME 3.3. MARKETING AND COMMUNICATION: ATTRACTING COMPANIES. SEDUCING STAKEHOLDERS*

*TITLE: BRINGING YOUR PARK TO MARKET: MARKETING AND BRANDING STRATEGIES FOR STPs*

**INTRODUCTION:**

**The advantages of a good communication and marketing plan:**

The main reason why it is important to have a good communication and marketing plan is because generally there is more offer than demand.

Nowadays, Science and Technology Parks (STPs) is not the unique instrument to foster innovation in our innovation system. The system has a variety of instruments that as the same as Science and Technology parks promote the innovation and business competitiveness.

For this reason, now more than ever, STPs need a good communication plan and a good marketing plan to be distinguished of the rest of instruments of the innovation system.

Also, financial sustainability is a key factor in the future of Science and Technology Parks and in this sense, to have a good strategy of communication could be more important now than before.

STPs are designing new value added services for their companies in order to reinventing the STP concept and adapting it to the current economic situation. However, if STPs have not idea to communicate these new services and this new concept of STP, nobody will be interested in them. Because, as it is said: what does not communicate does not exist.

As Peter Ducker said: "A company has two and only two basic functions: marketing and innovation". Marketing + innovation are the success combination and we can apply this combination to the SPTs activity to improve their impacts: to develop new innovative services for their clients and to know how to sell them.

To sum up, the main advantages to have a good strategy of communication and marketing plan are the following ones:

- It helps us to determine the image and main messages of our STP that we can disseminate.
- It helps us to determine our competitive advantages to differentiate ourselves from our competitors.
- It is very useful to know the necessities of our customers and how we can solve them.
- It is useful to analyze the best way to connect with our customers (channels, tools, language, etc...)
- It is a reference document to focus our efforts and to evaluate the results.
- It helps us to analyze activities that we are developing in a wrong way.
- It helps us to assess potential opportunities and future problems.
- It is a roadmap to achieve our goals.

## **METHODOLOGY:**

To analyze in deep the current marketing and communication plans of the science and technology parks (STPs), we have used the following methodology:

1º) The survey design with 52 questions about six themes: marketing strategy, marketing department structure, tools, impact, target, success stories.

2º) The survey was made with Google Drive to facilitate the answer of the STPs.

3º) The survey was sent by e-mail with a link to an online questionnaire to our 45 operative STP located in 12 different regions: Andalucía, Aragon, Cantabria, Cataluña, Madrid, Valencia, Galicia, Islas Baleares, Islas Canarias, País Vasco, Asturias y Murcia. The analysis of the impact in different zones is important to determine the effectiveness of different communication strategies.

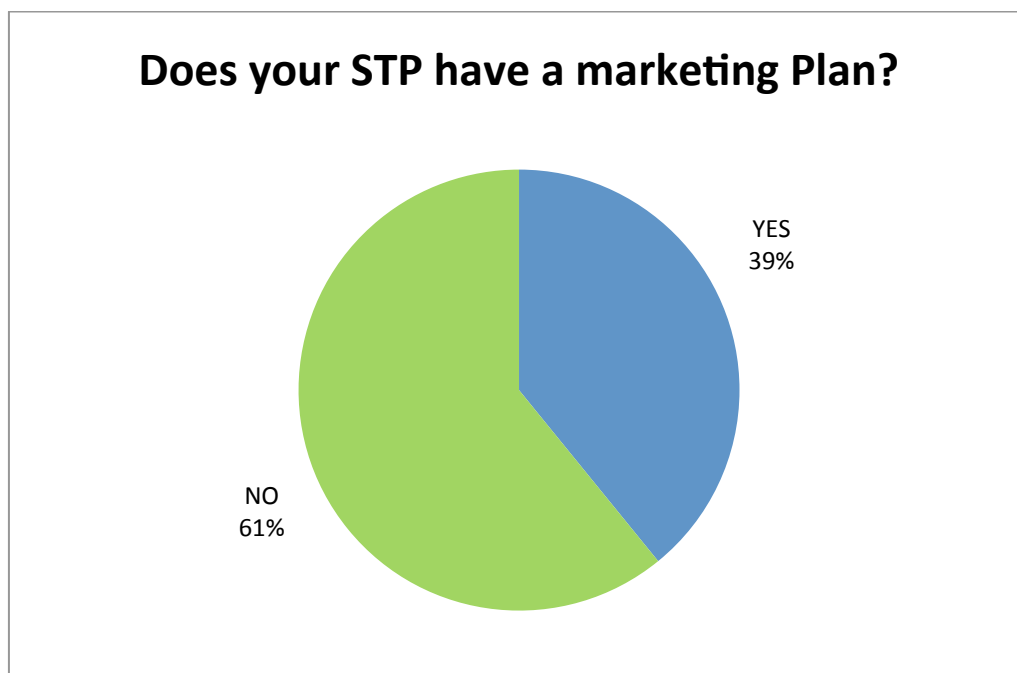
4º) Survey was answered by 51% of STPs, so, we considered we had a representative sample.

5º) To clarify the information received we elaborated graphics and then we compared the differences between strategies, structures, tools, impacts and target from the answer received to establish the main conclusions.

## **ANALISYS OF SURVEY RESULTS:**

### **Marketing Strategy:**

Looking at our questionnaire we can see that only less than 40% of STPs who answer this question has a defined marketing strategy.



To complete the previous question we asked to the parks that answered that they already have marketing plan what are the main strategic objectives that they want to achieve according to their plans.

After analyze the answer we can separate their objectives in 5 groups:

1. Attraction of new organizations to their facilities
2. To retain the companies already located in the STP
3. Promoting the STPs and reinforce their corporate image
4. To communicate park activities and services
5. Internal management

#### **Attraction of new organizations to their facilities:**

One of the goals that have more importance to the STPs is to attract potential new entities. This objective is very important for new STPs that have a large quantity of land available.

For STPs is not only important to attract companies, some of them are searching for research centers and other R&D organizations that can provide the needed knowledge to the STP. In some cases, the search for potential new entities is focused in a specific sector such as aeronautic, biotechnology, health, etc.

#### **To retain the companies already located in the STP:**

In relation with the first groups of objectives, it's also very important to the STPs retain their tenants companies. The companies have to perceive the added value of to be a part of a STP.

Because of this STPs have to fix good ways of communication with their tenants showing all the services that one company can use.

To differentiate their organization from other innovation spaces, the parks has to provide added value services and communicate them in a correct way, as we will see after, is very important.

#### **Promoting the STPs and reinforce their corporate image:**

Another group of objectives are focused in the corporate image of the STPs as companies. We have to keep in mind that one STP is also a business that has to make profit. The STPs are innovation areas more and more open each time becoming global areas that have to build a brand in the mind of their customers, partners and any of their stakeholders.

Also the corporate image and brand of STPs is an useful instrument for all the organizations located in them because they can use the name of the parks as a letter of recommendation for example to go to international markets, when they need to make a search for partners for the creation of a consortium in a project or to get access to some financial sources.

#### **To communicate park activities and services:**

The communication of park activities and services is a group of objectives that supports all the previous goals. When we communicate all the activities and services of the STP we are attracting new customers that can be interested in get the benefits of to be part of the STP, the current tenants that feel happy with the decision of locate their business in the STP and also reinforce their corporate image when they show themselves as a key actor and an active organization in their environment.

As we will see below the parks have different tools, specially related to ICT, like mailing, social networks, Website... to communicate with stakeholders and this instruments will have several uses depending of the kind of message, the target audience, etc. so it's very important to choose always the best way to communicate with any of them.

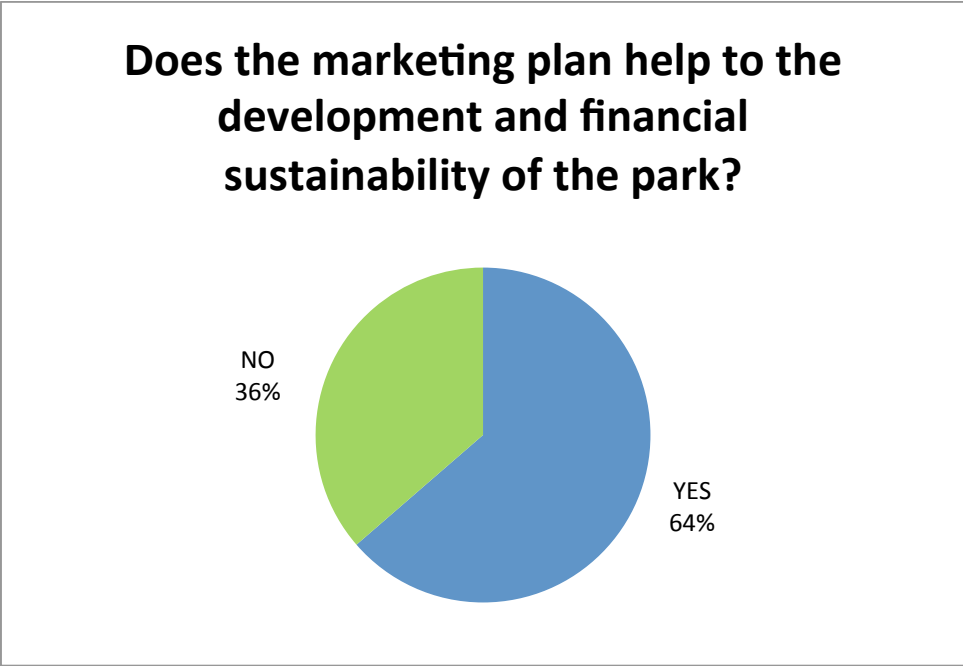
**Internal management:**

Finally, some of the polled STPs have fixed objectives looking to the management of their own organization. That includes tasks like internal communication management, human resources management, technology transfer and in some cases they also use the marketing plan to administrate a specific project.

Some of the STPs use marketing plans like a source to create new lines of business and services.

Looking at the objectives previously analyzed we can figure out how important is to have a very well defined marketing plan in our organization. To get better knowledge about if these plans are working or not in STPs we asked to them the following question:

*Does the marketing plan help to the development and financial sustainability of the park?*

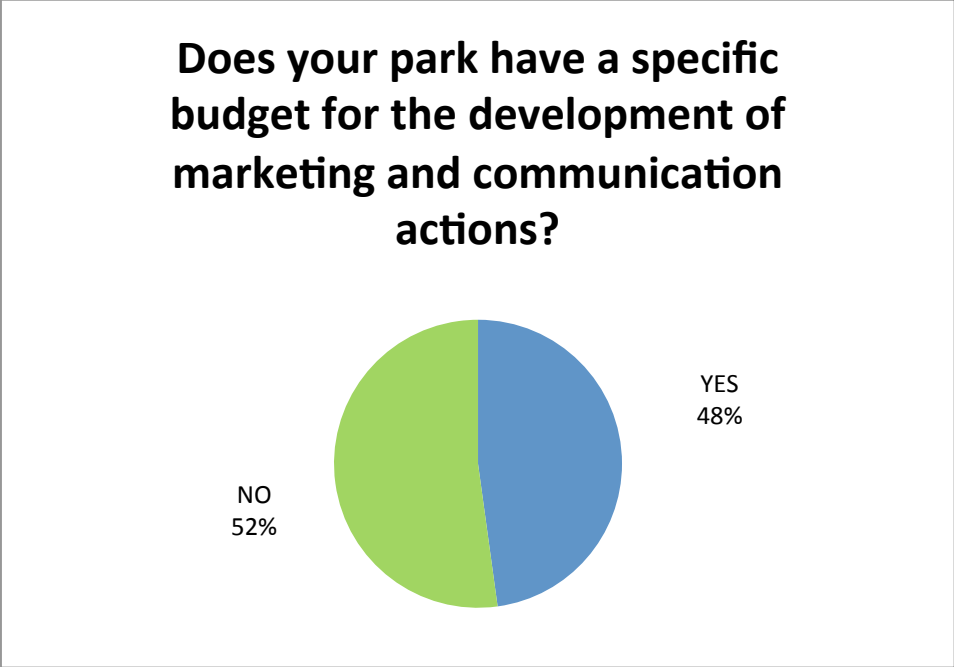


If we see the answer of Spanish parks, there are a 36% of STPs where marketing plan is not really helping to the correct development of the organization. However we have to keep in mind that if marketing plan is not helping to the park maybe it could be caused by a wrong previous analysis, required to achieve any good plan, problems to formulate or to write down the objectives and actions included in this plan or the reason of this could be problems in the implementation of marketing plan.

We will propose tools to assure a good previous analysis, that will be a key factor to write down our marketing plan and also we will provide mechanisms to try to get the best implementation with measures about the development of the plan and corrective actions if it's necessary.

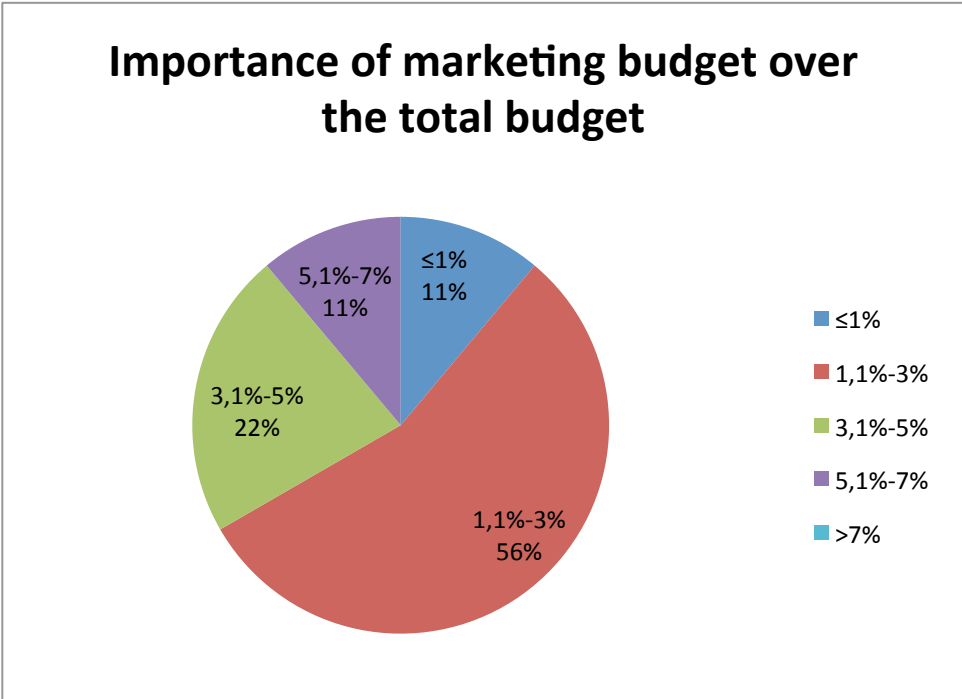
Another important aspect about the marketing plan is the importance of it in the budget of STPs. To analyze it we asked a couple of questions. First we would like to see if STPs have a specific budget to the development of this plan.

As we can see at the chart below, more or less the half of the polled STPs have a specific budget for marketing and communication actions. That result shows that the marketing and communication side of business haven't have yet enough importance to STPs or they aren't taking care of it.



In relation with the previous question we would like to know, in the cases of to have budget to this area what is the relative importance over the total budget. We can observe that the importance is quite low. In the most of answers these budgets don't represent more than 5% (78%) and the 56% dedicated between 1% till 3% over the total budget.

Some studies recommend having a budget around 10% and in the first three years of the business over 20%. So Spanish STPs are quite far from the average of business around the world.

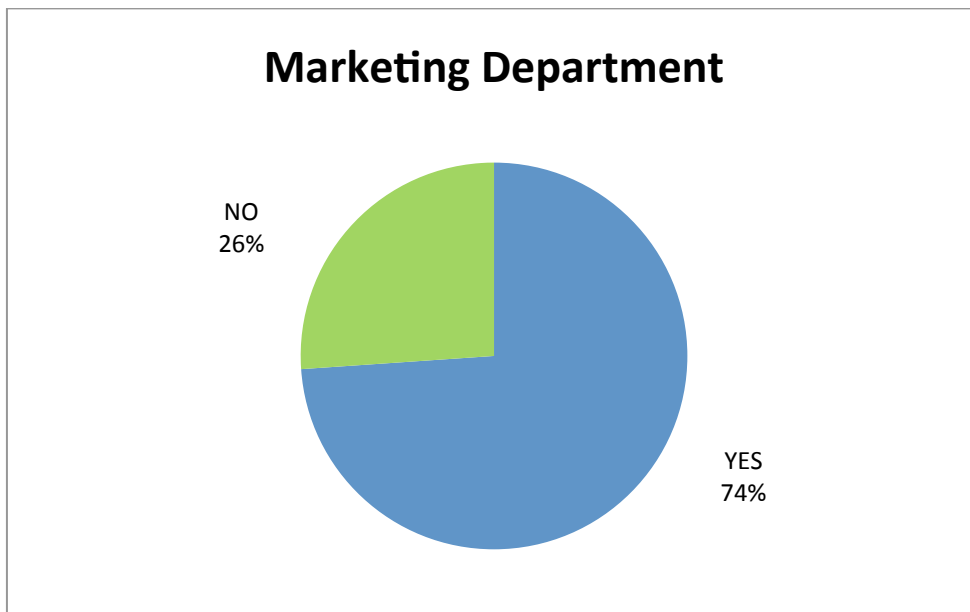


### Marketing department structure

After analyzing marketing plans of STPs we are going to take a look about the structure of marketing departments in Spanish parks. First of all we need to know if there is a marketing department in the structure of parks or if their tasks are assumed by other departments.

In the graph we observe that more or less three out of four (74%) polled parks have a marketing department so we can say that most of parks have people in charge of this specific area.

In relation with the group of questions about marketing plans we can say that even when some parks don't have a well-defined marketing and communication strategy, they have, in most of cases, a specific department to develop this kind of activities.



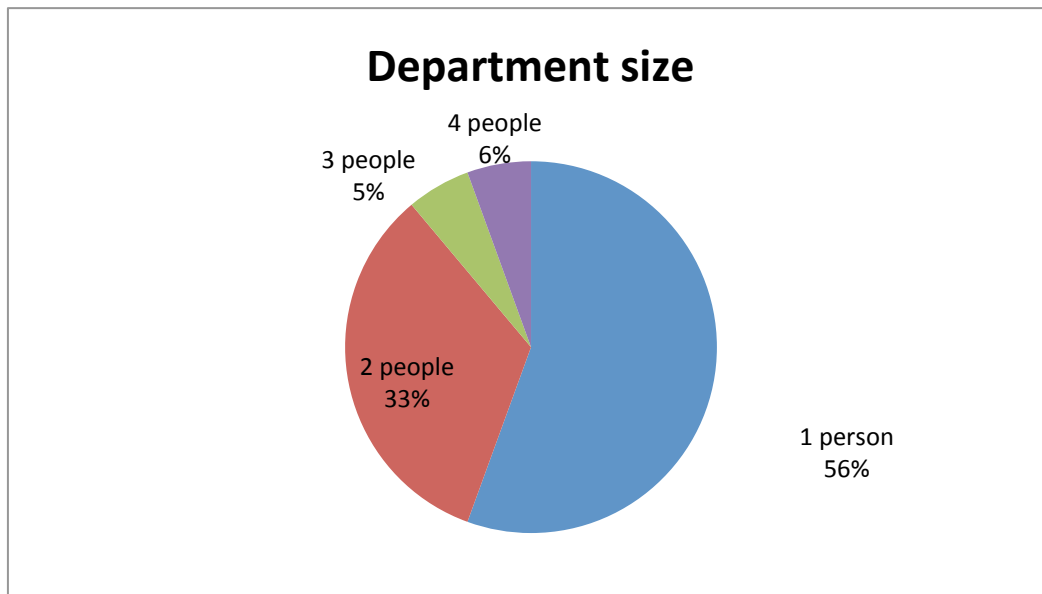
In case of lack of marketing department their roles aren't assumed by the same department in the parks. We have different options in each case and they are divided more or less equally between the parks. The management, Innovation area, administration, project managers even the financial area of the parks are areas that take the control of these tasks.

Other option, viewed in a couple of parks, is that the marketing work is outsourced to third companies and this area is not operated directly by the park.

Looking at those parks that have marketing department we will try to characterize how they works mainly asking about the number of people who compound them and the roles and activities that they are developing.

First, we analyze how many people be part of this department. If we look at the graph below, in the half of the parks the marketing department has only one person (56%) and adding the 33% of parks that have 2 people we can say that there are mainly one or two people in parks being part of marketing area (89%).

These numbers are quite logic because the average size of the staff for Spanish STPs is more or less between 3 till 10 people.



Trying to go into detail in the analysis we included a question about the roles that have the people into the marketing department. Those departments formed by two people, in most of cases, have a director or area coordinator and a technician.

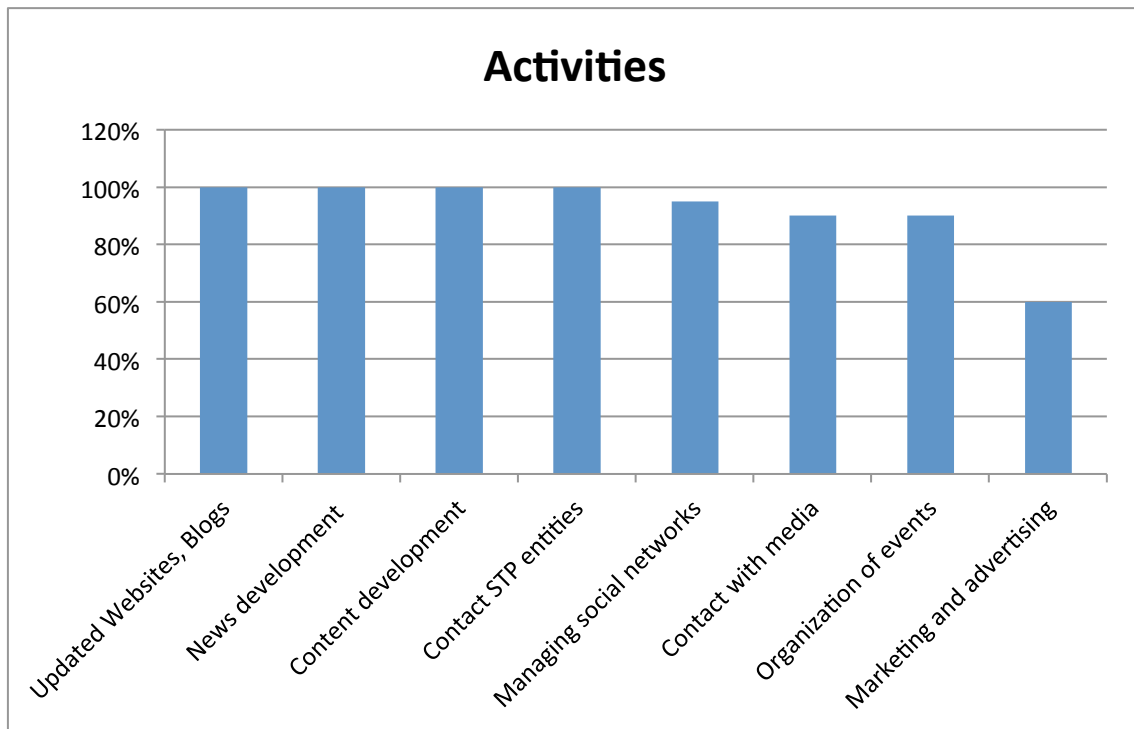
The technician could have different characteristics depending of the STP polled. This technician can be a journalist, a consultant, graphic designer, etc. In some cases this second person is an intern.

Finally, looking at the main activities developed by them, we can observe in the chart below that they are quite similar between Spanish STPs.

The main activities developed by them are:

- Updated Websites, Blogs (100%)
- News development (100%)
- Content development (100%)
- Contact STP entities (100%)
- Managing social networks (95%)
- Contact with media (90%)
- Organization of events (90%)
- Marketing and advertising campaigns (60%)





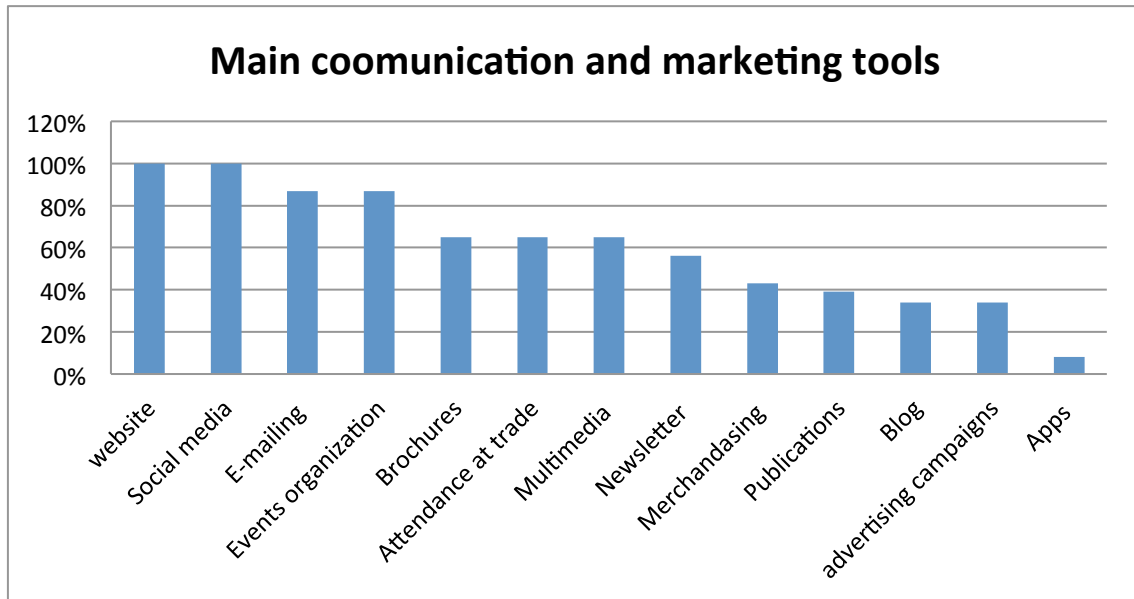
**Tools:**

Spanish STPs use similar tools than other communication and marketing department in other domains.

According to the survey we have made to the full members of APTE, the main communication tools they generally use are: a website and the social media (100%). In the third position we found the organization of events and also the e-mailing, both used by 87% of the PCTs.

These tools are followed by multimedia contents, brochures and attendance at trade shows, all with 65%. Newsletter and merchandising are used by the 56% and 46% respectively.

Mobile applications (8%), advertising campaigns (34%), publications and Blogs (both 39%) are the least used tools to promote the services and products of SPTs in Spain.



If we analyze in detail the information provided by the survey, we observe that parks are using mainly new technologies instead of the traditional communication and marketing strategies, such as advertising campaigns, publications or merchandising products.

The Spanish parks use in first place their websites and the social media to release their news to the target audience.

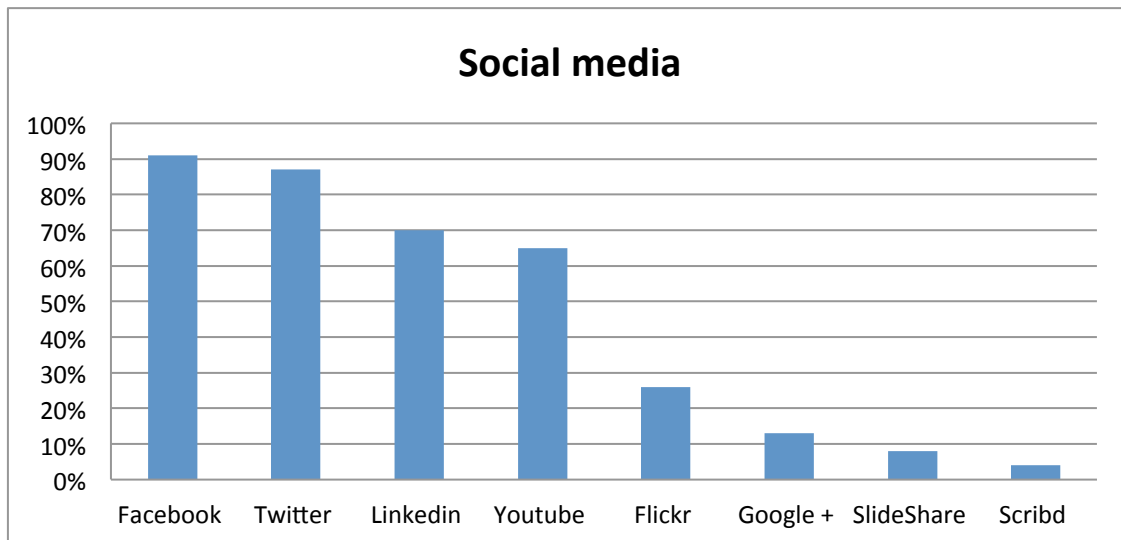
All Spanish STP have a website as a cover letter of their institution. Each website has a different design and they can be more or less interactive in the use of images, links, animations, etc. but most of them has a similar structure where the most important points to show are: services and infrastructures provides by the managing body of the park, the latest news and the agenda, next events and data base with companies located in the park.

In the science parks that are directly connected to universities generally they also have a research centers section in their websites.

The use of social media in the Spanish STPs has increase in the last years and most of the parks use at least one social media to promote their entities. Following the survey made by APTE, all parks confirm the use of social media as one of the most important tools nowadays in the communication and marketing departments.

At the question of which social media the Spanish STPs use, they prefer in first place Facebook (91%) follow by Twitter (87%). In a second level, they also use LinkedIn (70%) and Youtube (65%).

Other social media such as Flickr (26%), Google+ (13%), SlideShare (8%) or Scribd (4%) don't achieve the 30%.



According to the answer of the Spanish SPTs in the survey, the social media that report more feedback to the managing entities is Twitter, the microblogging media. 63% of the entities believe this social media gives them more result than LinkedIn (21%) or Facebook (16%) in their communication and marketing strategies.

The four main social media that Spanish SPTs use are complementary: Twitter and Facebook are used to get in contact with general audience, giving the possibility of share links to different contents (webs, photos, videos, infographics, etc) while Youtube is exclusively used to upload video and multimedia contents of the parks (corporative videos, events videos, etc.). On the other hand, LinkedIn is used for more specific audience, providing the possibility of creating groups of professional interest.

Most of the Spanish STPs adapt their messages according to the characteristics the social media have (80%), but still 20% of the them uses the same messages in all social media. Not using messages or contents adapted to each media can be counter-productive for the entity that wants to be promoted in internet.

Apart from websites and social media and the traditional tools that communication and marketing departments work, it's interesting to stand out the increasing use of blogs. Almost 50% of the surveyed SPTs have a blog that complement the corporative contents of their website.

A blog is a very important tool providing new contents to the audience, beyond the corporate information and press releases. If we analyses the contents of Spanish SPTs blogs we can find an interesting variety of contents, depending on the strategy each park want to approach.

Most of the blogs publish contents address to the entities located in the parks, such as public and private calls, practical advices for new companies and entrepreneurship, about internationalization, etc.

Other blogs are focus in the dissemination of the innovation and the technology transfer that their entities and research center are doing, providing information about the accomplishments achieved.

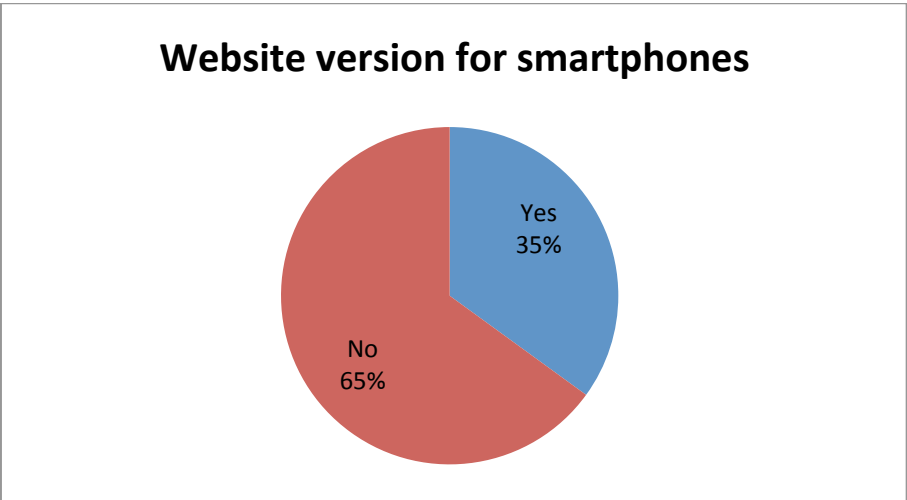
Some of them are collaborative blogs, where a group of expert write articles and manage the site or they are focus about a specific project.

Apart from all these tools we find important to mention a new kind of communication and marketing tool that is increasing little by little the market: the smartphone applications.

So far, only 8% of surveyed parks have developed an application (app) for smartphones, but this percentage is increasing each year.

Main of the apps developed from the SPTs is a mobile version of the website, with the basic information of the park and other contents: news, links to social media, list of companies located in the park, etc. In one of the cases the objective of the app is to guide the user through the park by augmented reality. Another one points out the geolocation of their entities through the app.

At the same time, 65% of Spanish STPs still don't have a version of their website for smartphones and tablets, what makes internet navigation through these devices more difficult to the audience.



**Impact:**

At this point we will analyze the impact of marketing and communication campaigns that the Spanish STPs implement.

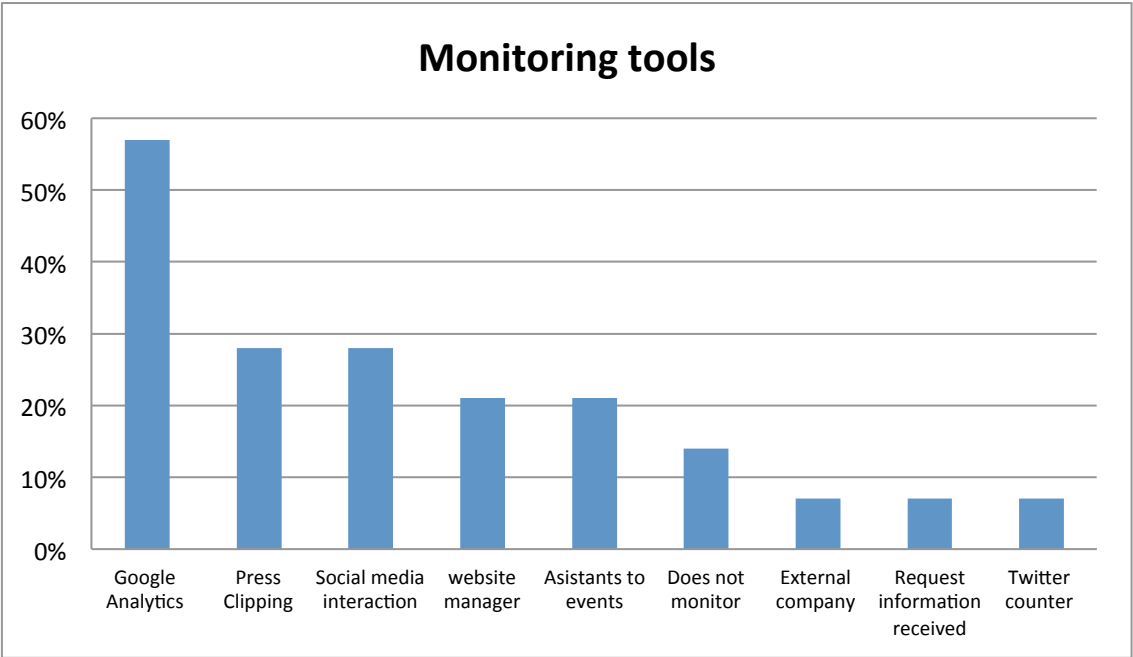
The communication and marketing department usually measure the impact of the communication campaign with different tools.

More than 50% of the Spanish SPTs uses Google Analytics (57%) to measure the traffic to their website. Moreover, they use the press clipping and the social media interaction (28%) to evaluate the impact of the activities they promote through the communication and marketing department.

Also, they usually measure the impact counting the number of attendees (21%) in the events that the parks organize and using a website manager tool (21%).

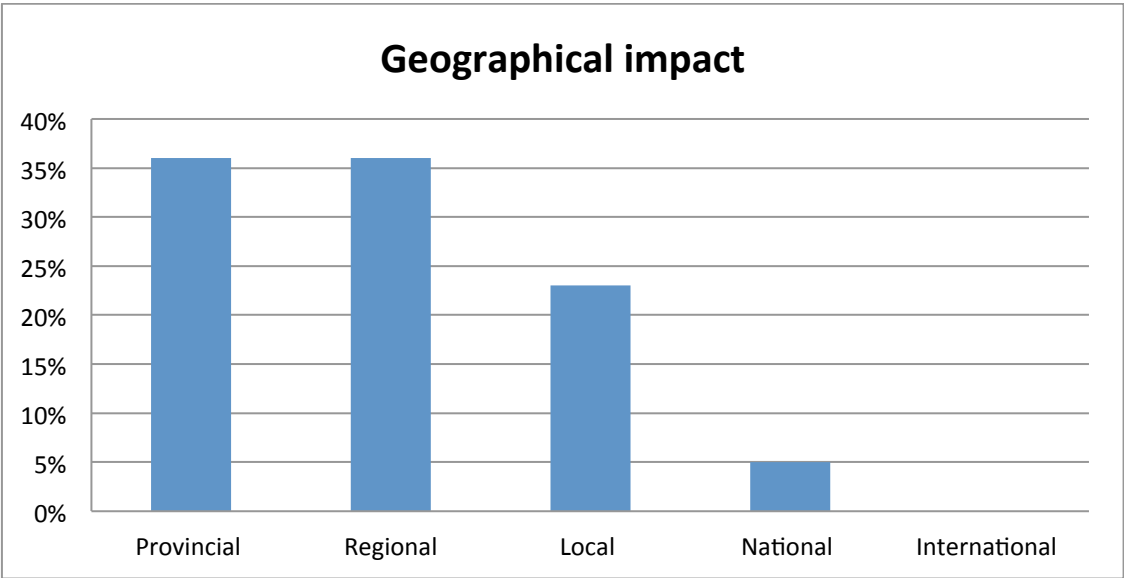
There are other tools the Spanish STPs uses but are less implemented until now: polls (7%) or Twitter counter (7%).

Some SPTs don't allow monitoring between the tasks of the department (14%) or hires an external company to do these tasks (7%).



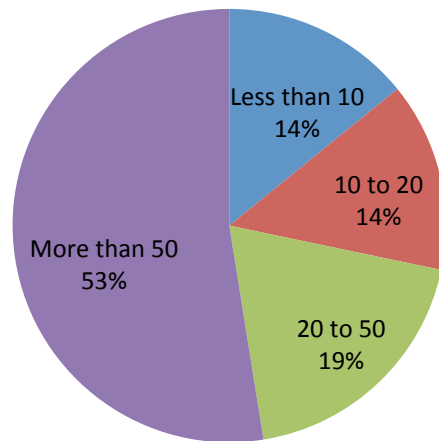
Regarding the geographical impact, most of the Spanish STPs consider that their communication and marketing activities have more impact in the provincial and regional areas (both 36%).

The local area has also a big impact, reaching 23%. If we analyse in national term, only 5% of the Spanish STPs consider that most of the impact has a national level.



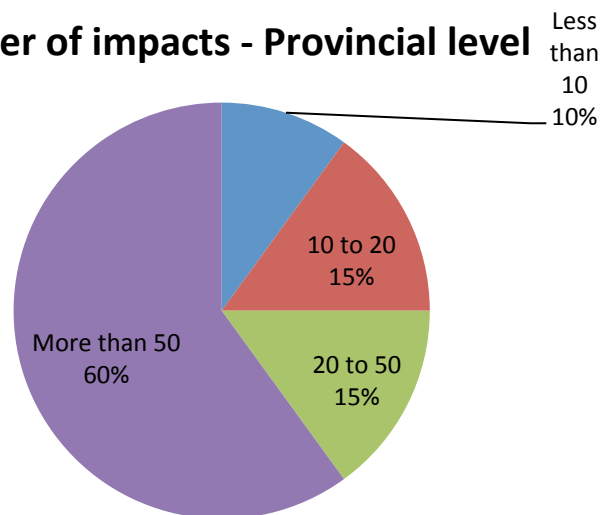
The average of impact in local level shows that 53% of the Spanish STPs have more than 50 impacts per year in the local mass media.

### Number of impacts - Local level



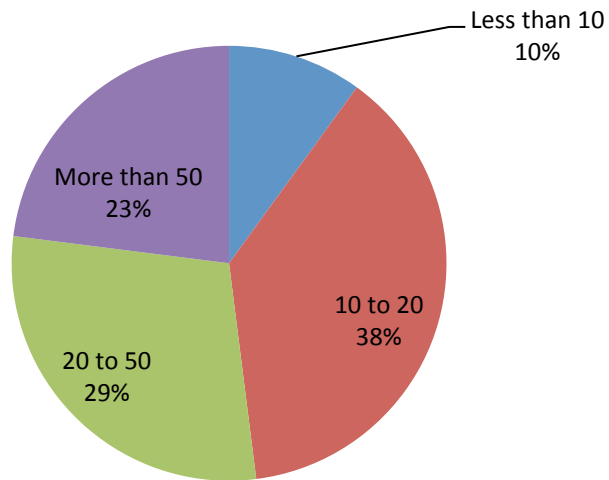
In a provincial level, the impact is bigger. 60% of the parks have more than 50 impacts per year in the media that work in the provincial.

### Number of impacts - Provincial level



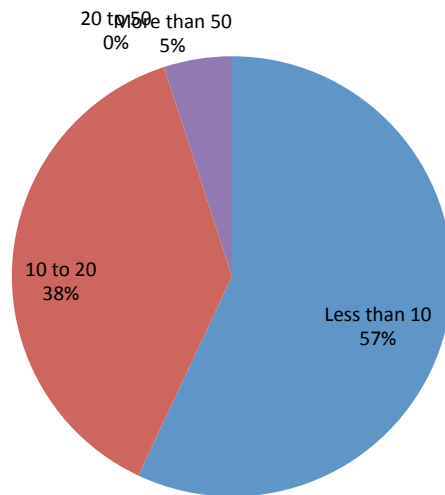
When we talk about regional level, the number of impacts decreases. Most of the parks have between 10 and 20 impacts per year in these kinds of media. But also 29% of the parks have count between 20 to 50 impacts.

### Number of impacts - Regional level



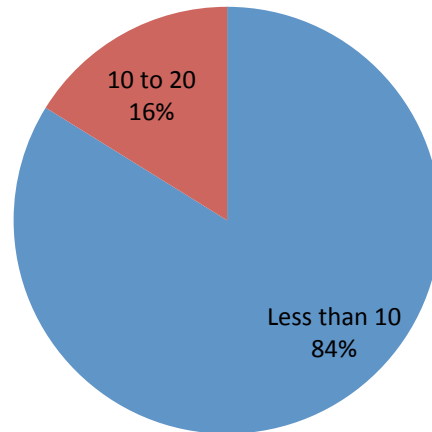
The average of impacts in national level, 95% of the Spanish STPs have less the 20 impacts per year. Only 5% of the parks overpass the 50 impacts in national mass media in a year.

### Number of impacts - National level

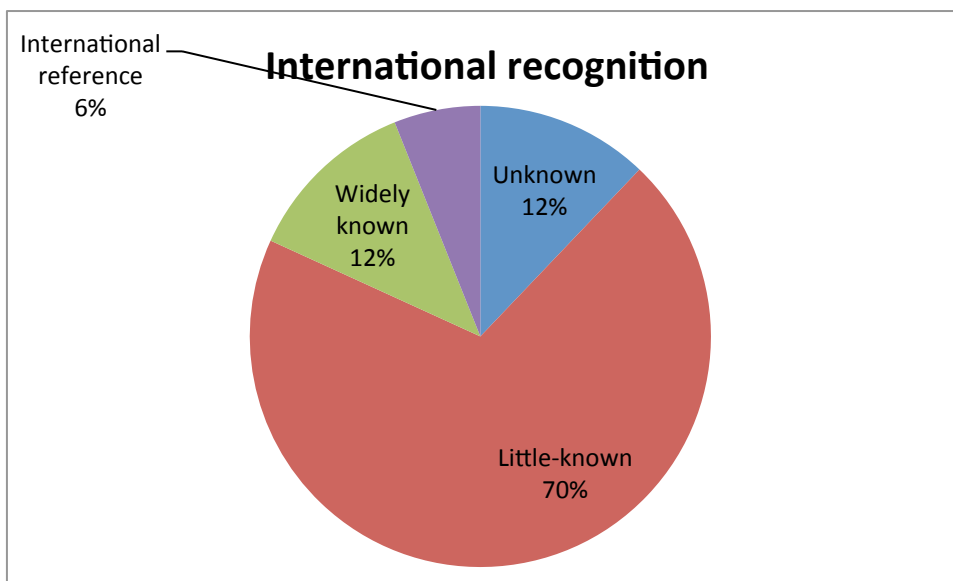


In an international level we have analyzed different elements. If we talk about the impact of the parks in international mass media, most of them ensure they have some repercussion, but most of them under 10 impacts per year (84% of the parks).

### Number of impacts - International level



To evaluate the acknowledgment of the Spanish STP outside Spain we have also analyzed the international recognition. 82% of the Spanish STPs consider themselves unknown or little-known in an international level. Only 6% are an international reference in parks.

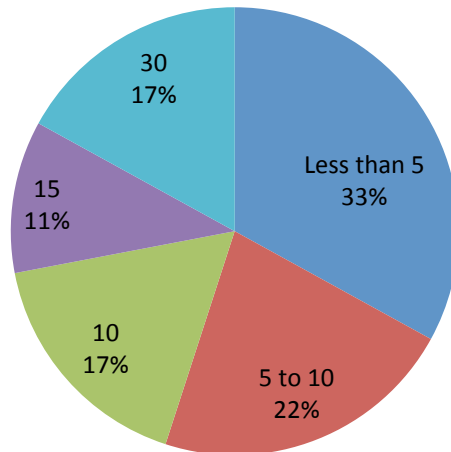


SPTs also received each year international mission, commercial, whether from universities or public organizations. Generally, these international missions aim to know the park, their activities, and their infrastructures, strengthen trade relations or commercial. These activities can be considered as one of the most important tools to promote the Spanish STPs in international levels.

When we compare the activity the Spanish STPs develops in international mission we find a big contrast. A third part of the Spanish STPs receives less than 5 international missions each year. 22% receives between 5 and 10 visits. On the opposite side, 17% of the parks receive more than 30 international missions per year, that means, that these parks have 2.5 international visitors per month.

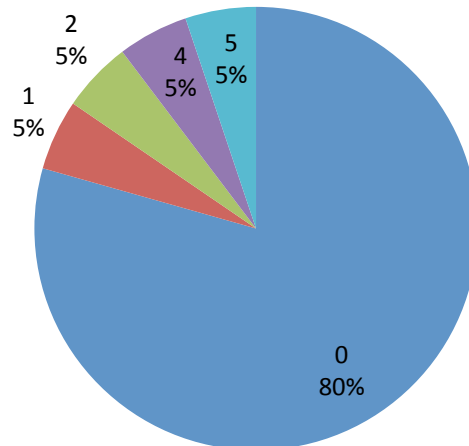


### International missions received in Spanish STPs



If we compare these data with the international missions that the Spanish STPs organized themselves for their companies to go abroad, the results shows that 80% of the Spanish STPs don't organizes any international mission. The remaining 20% organizes less than 5 missions per year.

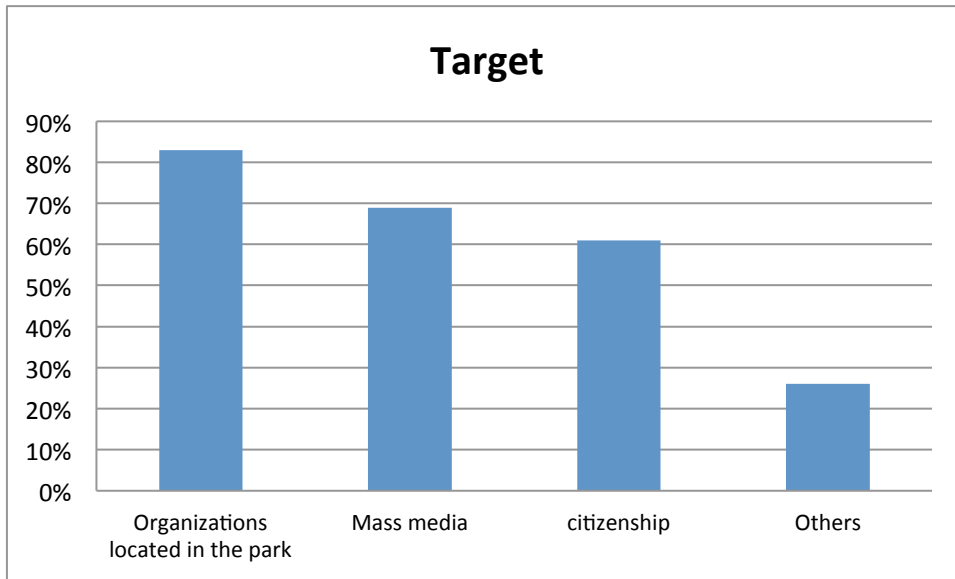
### International missions organised by Spanish STPs



#### Target:

All communication and marketing campaigns have clear the target they address. The Spanish SPTs are focus in four main targets: future organizations to be located in the parks (87%), entities already located in the parks (83%), mass media (69%) and citizenship (61%).

There other targets mentions by Spanish STPs: Entrepreneurs, students, workers, public entities...



To each target, the STPs use more or less the same tools to promote their projects and services, but depending on the audience, the use of one or another tool may change, as we will explain below.

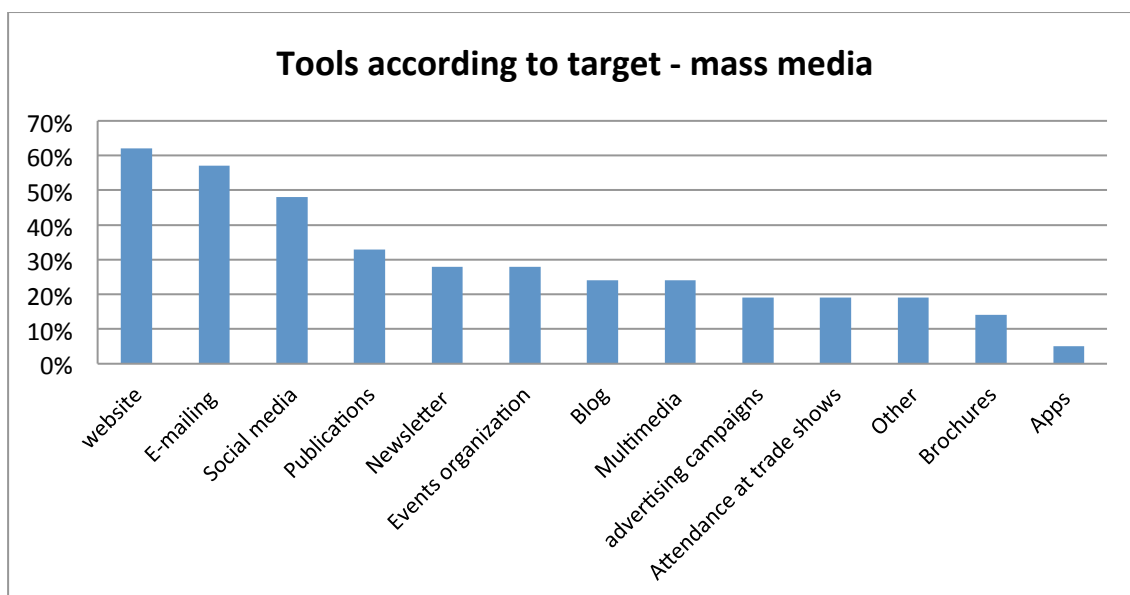
The strategy to promote the installation of new entities in the STPs uses four main tools: website (86%), organization of events in the STP (77%), social media (70%) and an e-mailing service (54%).



To promote the STPs around the entities that are already located in the parks they use more or less the same tools but with different percentages: corporative website is the dominant tool (91%), follow by social media (83%), and event organization and the e-mailing services are used by the 74% of the Spanish STPs.



In order to introduce and promote de STPs to the mass media they use three main tools: website (62%), e-mailing (57%) service and social media (48%). For this target, the percentages show less concordance between the Spanish STPs about the communication and marketing tools.



The other main target of the Spanish STPs is the citizenship. To approach citizenship, parks are working last years in different ways, like the promotion and collaboration in smart cities projects or in the dissemination of the innovation and new technologies that are being developed for the entities located in parks.

The Spanish STPs uses two main tools to contact to citizenship: their website and the social media, both are uses for the 95% of the parks to give public information about their project or activities.

## **EXAMPLES OF SUCCESS STORIES:**

### **Logo contest Mile of knowledge (Science and Technology Park of Gijón):**

Gijón Knowledge Mile is an environment that included, as key instrument, the Science and Technology Park of Gijón, with companies and knowledge-based institutions, college campuses of Viesques and Labour, with different qualifications and research groups with engineering and social sciences and Cabueñes hospital.

From October to December of 2012, Science and Technology Park of Gijón developed an activity with 3 main objectives:

- Boosting the concept of Mile of Knowledge of Gijón between students and professionals that are located in this Mile.
- Involving to local public in the process of creation of Mile knowledge image.
- To publicize the image of the park and get more followers in its social networks

The activity consisted in designing the logo of Mile of Knowledge through people that are working and living there (an universe of 20,000 people). In this sense, STP of Gijón organized a contest and published the contest details in STP website and main local newspapers.

<http://innovacion.gijon.es/noticias/show/17192-concurso-logo-milla-del-conocimiento>

More than 100 proposals of logo from all the contry were received and the selection of the three best logos was published in Facebook to collect voting of the public.

The voting process of the best logo had the participation of more than 600 followers and nowadays these followers remain being followers of STP social networks.

Here you are an example of an effective activity for the following reasons:

- Low cost.
- Important impact in the target and participation of people from all the country.
- Use new ICT tools.
- Original initiative.
- Big collaborative effect in target
- Important STP image effect.

### **The conquest of Science. Open Day of the Bizkaia Technology Park 2013:**

This activity was developed by Bizkaia Technology Park on last 17<sup>th</sup> November 2013.

It was an special occasion to show local society the importance of the Bizkaia STP activity. For this purpose, Bizkaia STP organized a wide variety of activities as: workshops, educational games, exhibitions, guide tours, tourist bus, shows and also charitable activities.

To promote this event, Bizkaia STP used a lot of different tools as press announcements, radio advertisements, advertising on tram, social networks, etc..

The main objectives of this event were to raise public awareness of the importance of the activity taking place in the park and show society the image of the park is an economic agent that contributes to the solution of current social problems.



Ad on a tram



News on social networks



Poster located on the streets

More than 5,000 people visited Bilbao STP and participated in the activities.

If we compare this activity with the before one, we can find these differences:

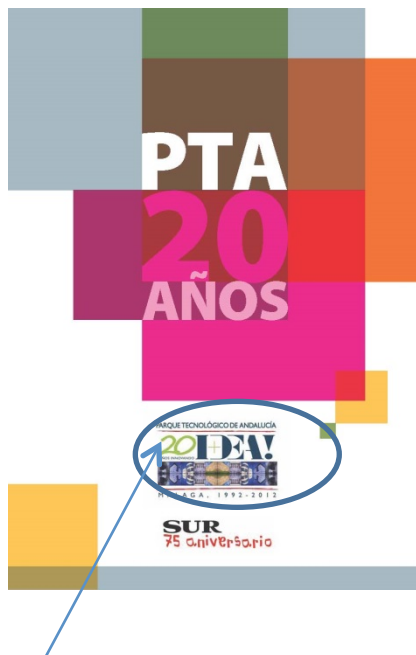
- This activity is more expensive than the other one.
- Use a big variety of tools (a mix between traditional and modern tools)
- More impact in the target.
- More participation of the target in the activity.
- Important STP as social agent effect.

### 20th anniversary of the Technological Park of Andalusia (20 years innovating):

On the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the Technology Park of Andalucía, the park designed a communication plan and activities to raise awareness to society what it means the 20 years of working for the park and for the city of Málaga.

For this reason, the management entity of the park organized the following activities which main objective was to achieve the maximum impact in the city:

A big commemorative cocktail in the Trade Fair and Congress of Málaga, an special magazine included in the most important newspaper of the city, and special report of the commemorative event in an important newspaper of Málaga, summer course with the University of Málaga, advertisement on the park streets and sport days.



Special magazine with a commemorative logo of anniversary



Special magazine with a commemorative logo of anniversary

If we compare this activity with the before ones, we can find these differences:

- This activity is more expensive than the other ones.
- Activity more corporative than the other ones.
- Use a big variety of tools but with predominance of traditional channels.
- More impact in the target at local and regional level.
- Low participation of the target in the activity.
- Important STP as innovative agent effect.

**However, the three activities selected have a common characteristic: only local and provincial focus.**

### **MAIN CONCLUSIONS:**

As we said at the beginning of this paper, to have a marketing and communication plan is very important to any kind of business and Parks are not an exception. Of course the most important is not to have one plan; the key is to have one plan well developed from the strategic analysis of the organization till the implication of all the staff to work as one and carry out all the actions contained in each plan.

There are a 36% of STPs where marketing plan is not really helping to the correct development of the organization. However we have to keep in mind that a good marketing plan always will help. Because of this, we think that this problem could be caused by several reasons: a wrong previous analysis, the key to success any good plan, problems when formulate or when write down the objectives and actions included in this plan, or problems in the implementation phase of marketing plan when parks turn into reality their plans.

In relation with this previous point about marketing plan we also observed that Spanish parks sometimes don't have a specific budget to these activities and even when they have budget, the relative importance of it is in most cases under 5% over the total. These numbers are far from the recommend average budget dedicated to marketing and communications actions that, as we mentioned in our analysis, normally is around 10% and in first three years over 20%.

Spanish STPs use similar marketing and communications tools than other companies. They are using mainly technologies related with ICT sector like website, mailing, social networks, etc. instead of the traditional actions.

It's important to adapt the messages and ways of communication to the different target groups previously identified by each STP depending on their own strategy. Most of the Spanish STPs adapt their messages according to the characteristics the social media have (80%), but still 20% of the them uses the same messages in all social media. Not using messages or contents adapted to each media can be counter-productive for the entity that wants to be promoted in internet.

Regarding the geographical impact, most of the Spanish STPs consider that their communication and marketing activities have more impact in the provincial and regional areas (both 36%).

The local area has also a big impact, reaching 23%. If we analyses in national term, only 5% of the Spanish STPs consider that most of the impact made by them has a national scope.

Looking at the international sphere, approximately 80% of Spanish parks are little-known or totally unknown at this level. One of the instruments that STPs have to increase their notoriety is the international missions. A third part of the Spanish STPs receives less than 5 international missions each year. 22% receives between 5 and 10 visits. On the opposite side, 17% of the parks receive more than 30 international missions per year that means that these parks have 2.5 international visitors per month. If we compare these data with the international missions that the Spanish STPs organized themselves for their companies to go abroad, the results shows that 80% of the Spanish STPs don't organizes any international mission. The remaining 20% organizes less than 5 missions per year.

In these sense, we have noticed that, despite of STPs aim for next year promoting their internationalization, they have not include this aspect in their marketing and communication plans and strategy and they continue focusing their strategies for a local or regional target.

For all the foregoing, APTE is developing a good practices guide to help STPS to establish a good marketing and communication strategy considering this and other aspects to be improved by them.