



## **CRKN Communications Outreach Plan**

### **Background**

By prioritizing the Communications function, the Board acknowledged that value for membership needed to be better communicated to Canadian Research Knowledge Network (CRKN) members. The position for Communications Manager was created to address this requirement. The Communications Manager's primary task is to create and implement a Communications plan. However, there is little available information to indicate where member priorities lie, and how the Communications Plan should support other Board and organizational objectives. Consequently, an outreach project has been designed to learn more about member priorities and to strengthen CRKN's relationship with its members.

The outcome of this research will go beyond the requirements of the Communications function. From an organizational perspective, it will:

- Determine direction for communications plan and prioritize issues
- Provide key inputs for the 2010-2012 Strategic plan
- Feed key information to the Value, Influence, Trends and Leadership (VITaL) task group
- Position CRKN for the next possible CFI funding application

### **Process**

The Communications Outreach plan draws on a three-stage process in which each stage contributes to the next to collect both qualitative and quantitative information.

#### **Stage 1 – Facilitated Brainstorming**

- Conduct a session in each of 4 regions – French in Quebec, English elsewhere
- 6-10 participants in each session
- Held at University facilities, coordinated with regional AGMs where possible
- Objectives:
  - to gain an overall sense of the membership's awareness level as it relates to services offered by CRKN
  - to understand how best to communicate with members
  - to understand what brand attributes are currently associated with CRKN
  - to find quotes and data points that could potentially be used to initiate conversations with members and partners
  - to explore member level of comfort with web 2.0 technologies

#### **Stage 2 – Exclusive Interviews**

- Up to ten 20-30 minute telephone interviews with Presidents, Funders, CIOs and Influencers

### Stage 3 – Quantitative e-Survey

- The results of the brainstorming session and exclusive interviews will be used to produce a questionnaire of approx 30 minutes in duration to survey all members, ensuring that all members have an opportunity to participate and that all conclusions drawn are truly representative of the member population
- The target for the survey will extend beyond Librarians to include Collections and Technical groups

### **Consideration**

For clarity and efficiency, we will ensure that the Tri-council policy on research involving people is satisfied. This work will be classified “Administrative” rather than “Academic” to ensure that ethics issues will be satisfied in advance. This will improve the rate of participation and speed completion times.

### **Conclusion**

By proceeding with this foundational research, CRKN will be able to establish a sound base of qualitative and quantitative information upon which to build new strategic organizational growth. This information will support our strategic planning process, the work of the VITaL Task Group, and give us a solid starting point for a new CFI funding proposal.

From a communications standpoint, if we learn more about attitudes, perceptions, priorities and technology preferences, we will be able to offer increased value to our Members by translating our past and current achievements into easily consumable pieces. We will also be positioned to develop new means of communication with our Members going forward based on the survey-based findings of this project.