

Ministry of Finance

Introducing the euro

A major challenge for the government communication professional

Conference on Euro Changeover
Preparations
Warsaw, Poland, 10/03/2011

Jeroen Sprenger



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Introduction

- Who is *Jeroen Sprenger*?
- The first introduction of the euro
 - > A unique operation
- The euro
 - > A controversial political symbol
- Introducing the euro
 - A challenge for the communication profession



Do you still remember...

- 1992 Treaty of Maastricht
- 1995 Name for single currency
- 1997 Treaty of Amsterdam
- 1998 Founding of EMU and ECB
- 1999 Euro introduction in the Stock Exchange
- 2001 Entry of Greece
- 01-01-2002 E-day for 12 EU-countries





Differences between first and later introductions

<u>Then</u>

- Start communication campaign first countries in 1996, while
 - EMU / ECB wasn't founded yet (May1998)
 - Participating countries were yet unknown (May 1998)
 - Exchange rate was yet unknown (Dec 1999)
 - Changeover scenario wasn't yet developed (2001)
 - Design and security specs banknotes and coins were yet unknown (Sep 2001)

Now

- The euro is already there!
 - For better and for worse ©
- Recent experiences in new member states with introduction of the euro



- Now introduction is a solo operation
- No long double circulation necessary



Similarities...

- It is still a major operation...
 - Everyone is involved!
- Physical introduction has to go hand in hand with communication
 - Milestone approach

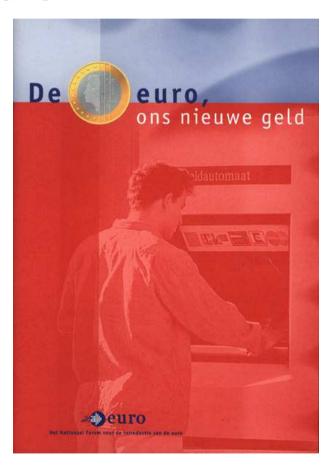


 The communication campaign should not be an issue of public debate



Communication infrastructure - 1 -

- Command, control, communication...
 - Communication board is copy of Changeover board
- Corporate identity
- Back office, backbone
- Communication and press strategy are complementary





Communication infrastructure - 2 -

- Committing partners, committed partners
 - Get everyone involved who has to play a role in the introduction
 - The financial sector
 - Social partners
 - Retail sector
 - Consumers' associations
- And make them ambassadors!

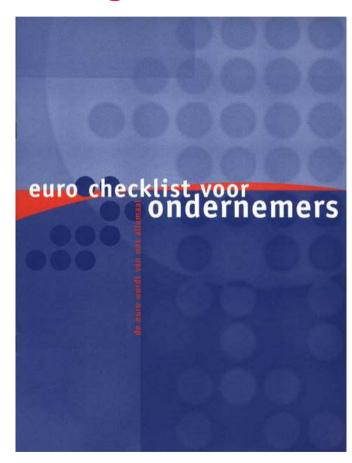




Communication plan and planning

<u>Advice</u>

- E-day is focal point
- Start intensive public campaign <u>4 months</u> before
- Presentation exchange rate, national side, 6 months before
- Informing business sector, small and medium enterprises, retail sector <u>12 months</u> before
- Start preparations at least 24 months before





Communication strategy

- Define the target groups
 - General public
 - Vulnerable groups
 - Ethic minorities
 - Business sector
 - Small and medium enterprises
- Develop a communication strategy for all target groups
- Sing from the same book, use the same tone of voice!



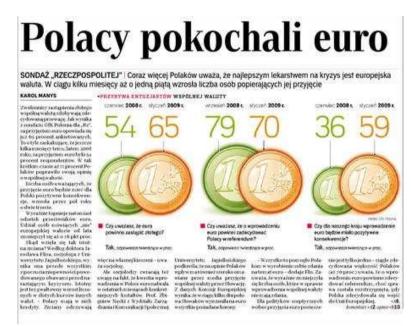


A national campaign with an European

- dimension is part of EU-accession conditions
- EU decides on passing the euro exam
 - > Decision should be made at least 12 months before Eday
- EU organises supporting twinning programme

But...

 Pay a respectful farewell to the zloty







Concluding remark

- Communicating about introduction of euro is all about managing and earning public confidence!
 - Make a perfect performance of the physical introduction
 - Show that the government can handle such a big event
 - Make the public enthousiast, let them forget their cynicism





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