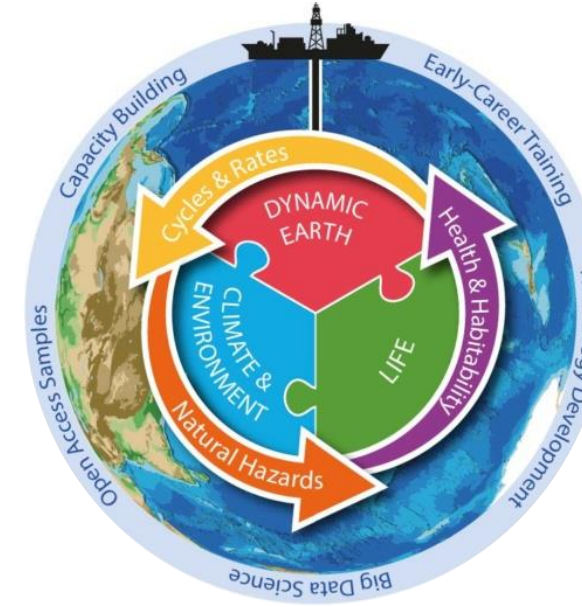


## CHALLENGE - The "Situational Analysis"

Scientific ocean drilling has a new and exciting 2050 Science Framework to look towards (Koppers, A.A.P., and R. Coggon, eds. 2020; [2050 Science Framework | IODP Future | IODP](#)). As part of this new Framework, Enabling Element 1 sets a clear remit for science communication within the Program:

*"Using a variety of social media and web-based platforms, data and results will be broadly disseminated to educators, policymakers, and the public, securing scientific ocean drilling's position as the authoritative source of information about the Earth system."*



**So how do we achieve the above remit?**

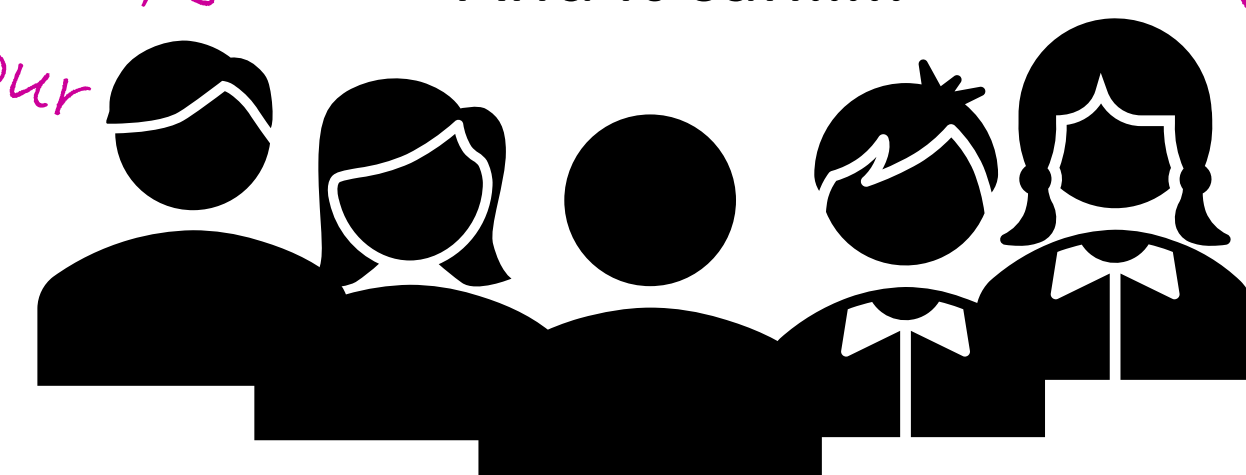
**Through strategy, story and unified, scalar communications plans.**

Akker ([Brand Stories vs. Signature Stories: What's the Difference?](#) 2018) discusses the power of a signature story – one that delivers or supports a strategic message. It is a tactical asset that provides visibility, and persuades or inspires over an extended time.

Communication is strategic when it is completely consistent with the organization mission, vision, values.

And it can.....

*Strengthen Relationships*  
*Influence Behaviour*  
*Build Support*  
*Impact Public Opinion*  
*Change Public Policy*  
*Raise Awareness*



**Institutional goals (IG)** are concerned with growth, increase and stability. **Communications goals (CG)** are concerned with information, news and discussion, but always serving and supporting the higher level institutional goals. USSSP have developed 9 institutional goals and 24 communications goals to guide the next 12 month period. For example:  
IG = **Inform and inspire the public, empowering citizens through improved ocean and earth science literacy, fostering stewardship of the Planet and showcasing the public good coming from federal funding of IODP.**  
Related CG = **Communicate the relevance of the overarching program to society, in order to establish new engagement with audiences outside our current community.**

**Strategy is an idea, an approach or a plan of action, designed to achieve your goal. Each goal will have its own strategy, tactics and metrics.**  
All USSSP public-facing strategies will deliver our key messages by being:

- Compelling** – designed to stimulate activity through use of imagery and narrative to create intrigue, mystery and excitement.
- Simple** – uses easily understandable language with no jargon.
- Memorable** – easy to recall and repeat through the use of storytelling.
- Relatable** – has an active and not passive voice so as to bring the audience along with the research and enable them to see themselves in the stories.
- Tailored** – adapted for different audiences and utilizing multiple platforms.

**Tactics are platforms for the delivery of content - the toolkit to reach your audience.** USSSP plans to use a **Transmedia approach** to build reach and recognition with outward-facing audiences.

- Develop a clear visual identity** through colour, graphics and font across all digital media so USSSP stories are easily recognized.
- Developing a podcast series** that follow the personalities involved in IODP and their personal journeys into science.
- Working collaboratively with Influencers on Twitter, the top 10 ocean-related YouTubers, and other UN Ocean Decade Nexus organizations** to refine our content to be more appealing to specific demographics, and share content more widely.

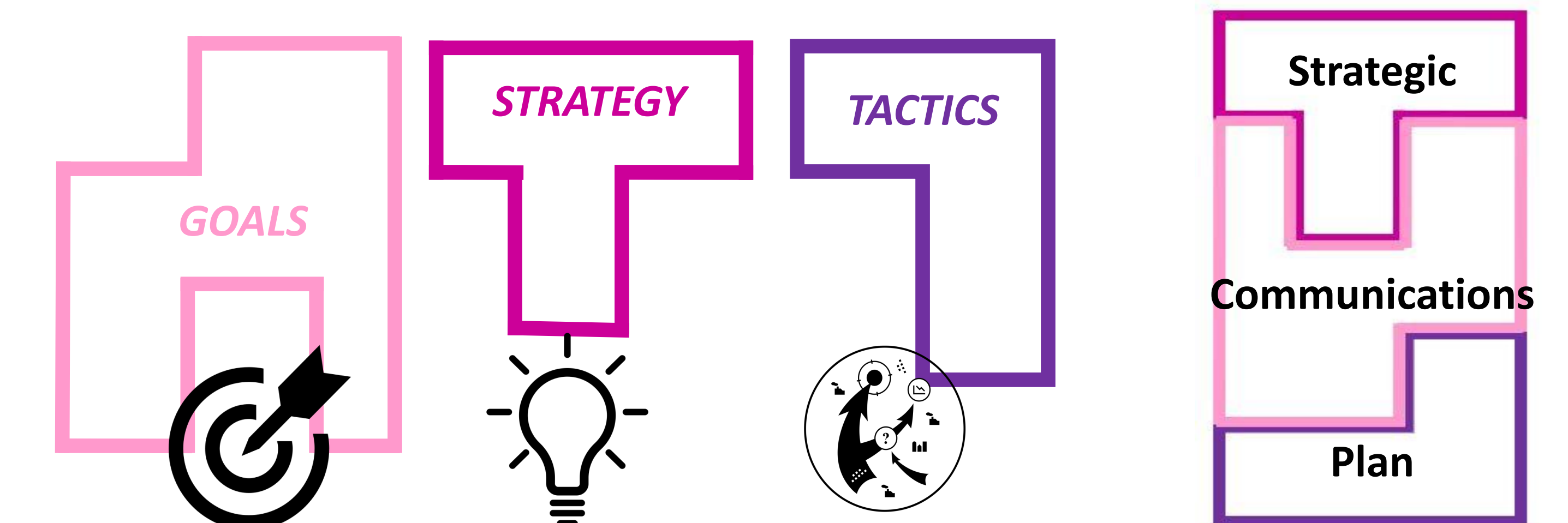
**Metrics measure your IMPACT and tell you if your strategy is working.**

- In the first 12 months, USSSP will concentrate on refining what social media / digital interaction metrics are useful for us. In the first instance we will monitor:
  - Applause rate** – ratio of likes against total number of followers
  - Amplification rate** – ratio of "shares" against total number of followers
  - Average engagement** – shares and follows against total number of followers
  - Conversion rate** – click through and take action e.g. subscribing to newsletter
  - Bounce rate** – click through and then abandon page quickly
  - Optimal "send" times** based on post reach and times people are usually online
  - # trend analyses** – trending hashtags and key words in your subject area

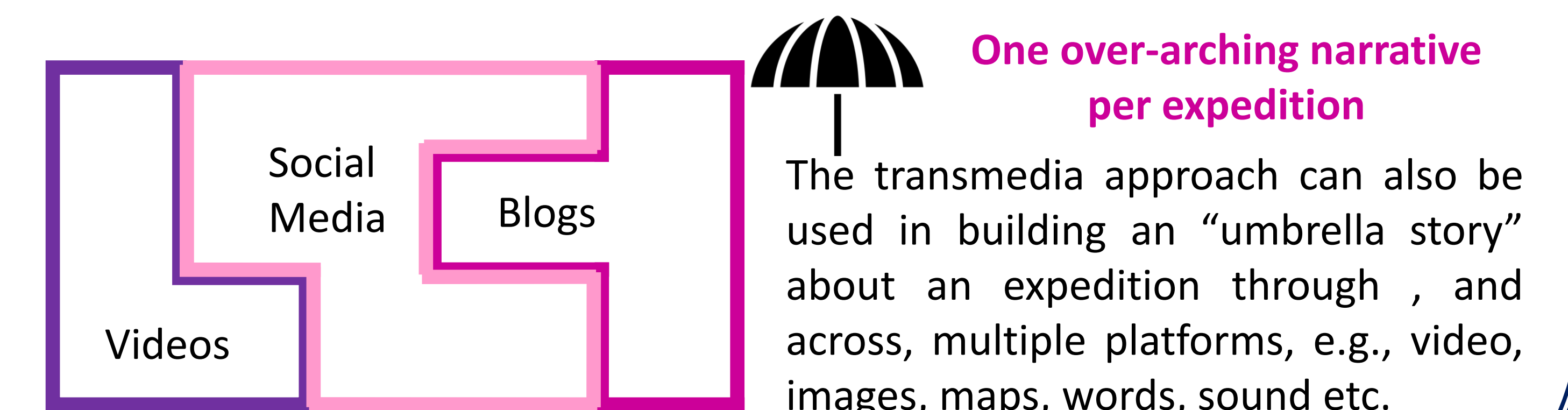
**Evaluation judges how successful your efforts have been, and what needs to be modified for future activities.**

- USSSP plan to **monitor social media metrics on a monthly basis.**
- At the end of month 6, a more detailed analysis will be undertaken to establish if anything needs to be modified for the second half of the monitoring term.
- In month 12, a new strategy will be devised to move the goals forward based on lessons learnt from this first phase.

## TRANSMEDIA – A single strategy, multi format approach



You have worked out why you need to communicate from both an institutional and communications viewpoint; what you want to achieve through your communication; and the toolkit you are going to use to communicate. Bringing these three concepts together in a strategic manner ensures they present a united, and so stronger communication, that continually supports the key institutional messaging of the program, support office or expedition.



**One over-arching narrative per expedition**  
The transmedia approach can also be used in building an "umbrella story" about an expedition through , and across, multiple platforms, e.g., video, images, maps, words, sound etc.

## CONSIDERATIONS

- Develop a strong visual identity** that runs from program to expedition level.
- Develop strategic communications plans** at program, national and expedition levels so everyone knows what the expectations and key messages are.
- Bring discussion about **science communication goals in at an early stage.**
- Design for your audience** – one size does not fit all!
- Use multiple tools** to communicate the same narrative to different audiences.
- Embrace the power of storytelling** to bring science to life and make it relevant.
- Make science communications emotive and personal.**
- Use imagery** to enhance your narratives.

*"Data makes you credible. Stories make you memorable".*  
**Elizabeth Bailey, 2013.**

