



BUILDING STRONGER COMMUNICATION IN FENCING

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How can we create more visibility, engagement and value for our sport?



A Little About My Perspective

My EFC role focuses primarily on writing articles for the website and contributing to communication projects when involved.

Marketing background

Sports projects

Olympic athlete

Editorial content



Finding a Dialogue

Not a rulebook.

Different federations have different audiences, resources, budgets and priorities.

What could we improve together?



The Olympic Visibility Effect

Fencing is a niche sport.

Most of our communication reaches people already inside the fencing community.

Every four years, the Olympic Games bring an extraordinary wave of visibility: media attention, new fans, inspired children, sponsorship interest and club registrations.

But what happens when the Olympic spotlight fades?



What Happens Between Olympic Games?

The attention grows around the Games, then often fades as the Olympic cycle continues.

How can we turn a temporary wave of interest into a lasting connection?

Some federations sustain attention between Games; others work with far fewer resources.

We cannot copy football or tennis — but we can create more value within our own ecosystem.



Communication Is Bigger Than Social Media

What are we doing to make fencing easier to discover, follow and enjoy?

Communication begins before the first Instagram post or press release.

Event experience

Information

Accessibility

Media

Stories

Every competition is an opportunity to tell a story. Every athlete has a story worth sharing.



A Change of Mentality

Communication is not something that happens only after the competition.

Communication is part of the competition.



Who Are We Communicating With?

Athletes, coaches and referees.

Parents and young fencers.

Potential new fencers.

Spectators and potential fans.

Media and journalists.

Sponsors and partners.

People who have never experienced fencing.

Other?

Different audiences. Different needs. Different messages.



One Sport. Different Perspectives.

A competition result means something different to an athlete, a parent, a journalist or a potential sponsor.

Effective communication starts with understanding what matters to each audience.

The right message, to the right audience, through the right channel.



One Story. Different Communication Channels.

OWNED MEDIA

Channels we control directly.

EFC website

EFC social media

EARNED MEDIA

Coverage created by independent media.

Television

Newspapers & magazines

Online sports publications

Local & national media

SHARED MEDIA

Content amplified through our community and partners.

Athletes

Clubs

National federations

Partners

Fencing community

Our communication does not end when we press “publish”.



One Story Can Travel



ONE STORY → MULTIPLE AUDIENCES



THE COMPETITION EXPERIENCE. Venue

Inside the fencing system, we naturally focus on athlete needs: space for fencing bags, warm-up areas, equipment and piste layout.

All of this matters.

But these needs should not be met at the expense of spectator seating.

If people want to watch fencing and there is nowhere to sit or see the action, we have already created a bad spectator experience.

So it's important to add one more stakeholder to consider also during the organization of the events. Yes today we don't have usually a lot of spectators but they will rarely appear if there are no conditions for it.



THE COMPETITION EXPERIENCE. Live results

Live results are useful only when they are published and updated.



THE COMPETITION EXPERIENCE. Live Streaming

A live stream creates a venue without walls.

Even a modest, reliable stream can bring families, clubs and fans closer to the event.



THE COMPETITION EXPERIENCE. Schedule

Announce a dedicated programme with clear starting times — and respect the schedule.

Imagine opening a live stream at the announced time and finding the bout already at 9-7.

Or arriving at the venue after the final has begun.

Avoid starting early.

If changes are unavoidable, communicate them promptly.



THE COMPETITION EXPERIENCE. Make the Finals Feel Like Finals

Where feasible: athlete introductions, a presenter, clear scoring, music and a dedicated finals piste.

Small improvements can change the whole atmosphere.



From Results to Stories

A podium photo.

Names.

Countries.

Scores.

Congratulations.

Correct information — but is it the whole story?

INFORMATION

A fencer won a European circuit event.

STORY

Who are they? What happened? Why does this result matter?



There Is More to Communicate Than Winning

RESULTS

Wins

Defeats

PEOPLE

Athletes

Coaches

Referees

Volunteers

DEVELOPMENT

Education

Projects

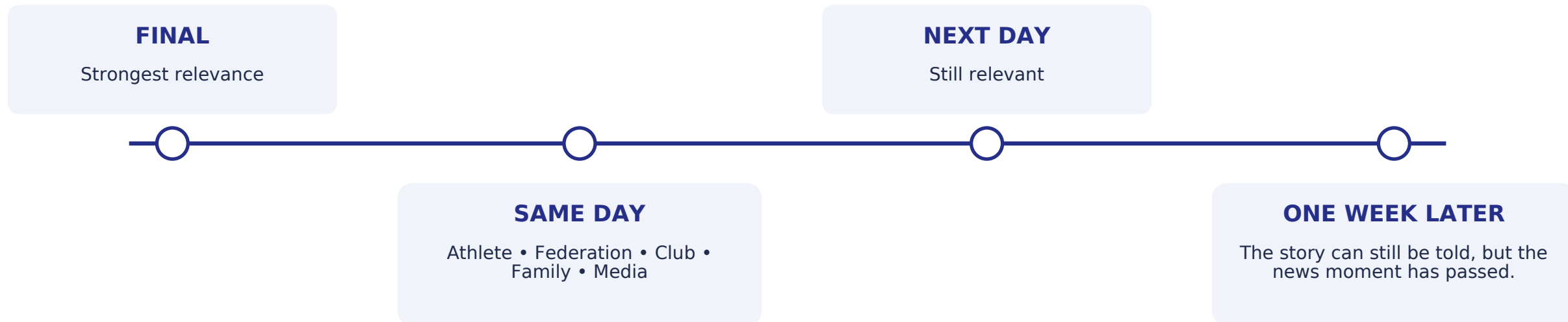
Community

If we communicate only medals, most of what fencing is remains invisible.



Timing Matters

The news value and immediate distribution potential are strongest while the moment is still fresh.



The earlier we share, the greater the immediate potential for distribution.



Creating a System for Storytelling

The podium is only one part of the competition: a first-time finalist, a comeback, a coach or a volunteer may also have a story worth telling.

Media need reliable facts, quotes and accessible contacts.

PROPOSAL FOR DISCUSSION

Immediately after the finals, organisers could conduct a short interview with the winners and send a few answers, insights and photos to:

Alessandro Noto — EFC Social Media

alessandronoto79@gmail.com

Erika Kirpu — EFC Editorial Content

erika@fencing-efc.eu

**Vincenzo De Bartolomeo — EFC
Marketing Responsible**

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Questions (Proposals)

What does this victory mean to you?

What went through your mind at the decisive moment?

What comes next?

What was the toughest moment? What helped you overcome it?

Who would you like to thank? And why?

Etc.

Adapt the questions to the athlete and the story.

One Interview. Many Pieces of Content.



Better communication does not always mean creating more. It can mean using what we already create more effectively.



Athletes: Our Strongest Stories

People connect with people: personalities, emotion, ambition and authenticity.

Give athletes the opportunity to tell their stories in their own words.

Media interviews, social media, difficult questions and personal boundaries.

Communication skills can be trained — participation should remain a choice.



COMUNICATION: One Competition, Many Stories

BEFORE

preview and how to watch.

DURING

results, clips and interviews.

AFTER

reports and human stories.

One event can live much longer than one weekend.



Consistency Builds Recognition

NAME

Same event name

IDENTITY

Same visual identity

HASHTAGS

Same hashtags

LINKS

Clear links

FORMAT

Recognisable competition format

LANGUAGE

Consistent terminology

Consistency makes communication easier to recognise, understand and trust.



Same Information. Different Experience.

LEFT: HARD TO FOLLOW

European Cadet Circuit!!!
Tomorrow!!!
Finals approximately evening
Results: link in bio
Livestream maybe available
#fencing #sport #europe #final ...

RIGHT: EASY TO FOLLOW

EFC CADET CIRCUIT • BUDAPEST

FINALS • 18:00 CET

Women's Épée • Men's Foil

WATCH LIVE → clear link

LIVE RESULTS → clear link

European Fencing Confederation

Illustrative examples — not real EFC posts.

Same information. Less effort for the audience.



Before You Post, Ask Three Questions

WHO is this for?

WHY should they care?

WHAT should they do next?

Watch

Read

Attend

Register

Share

Discover



Create Content People Want to Share

ATHLETE

Would the athlete share it?

CLUB

Would the club share it?

FEDERATION

Would the federation share it?

PARTNER

Would the partner share it?

One publication. Multiple communities.

Shareable does not mean sensational.



Communication Is Shared

ATHLETES

CLUBS

FEDERATIONS

ORGANISERS

EFC

No single press officer can discover every story alone.



Working Together: Local to European

From my editorial perspective, one practical opportunity is to share more stories across our network. Interesting projects, athletes, competitions and initiatives deserve to be discovered.

What happened?

Why is it interesting?

Who is involved?

Who can we contact?

Photos, links and basic context can be more useful than a polished press release.

A club discovers a story → A federation amplifies it → A European audience sees it.

We can make our existing communication networks work together.



Set a Clear Communication Objective

Before launching a communication activity, define what you want to achieve.

Increase visibility?

Attract new spectators?

Encourage club registrations?

Strengthen community engagement?

Create value for partners?

Different objectives require different communication strategies.



How Do We Measure Success?

Visibility

Reach, impressions

Engagement

Shares, comments

Interest

Website visits

Participation

Registrations

Event attendance

Spectator numbers

Media visibility

Media coverage



From Data to Better Decisions

PLAN

CREATE & PUBLISH

MEASURE

LEARN & IMPROVE

Communication is a continuous process. Understanding what works allows us to make better use of our resources.



Better Communication with Limited Resources

Many clubs and federations have limited budgets, staff and time.

The answer cannot simply be: “Do more.”

One results link.

One reliable finals schedule.

One interview.

One story.

Use what you already have more effectively.



We Do Not Need to Change Everything

Tomorrow

Not every event needs a show; not every federation needs a large media team.

Perhaps each of us can improve just one thing.



What About One Communication Ambassador?

ONE MOTIVATED PERSON

at every event

Taking photos

Recording short videos

Speaking to athletes

STORY FINDER

Collecting quotes

Finding interesting stories

Sharing what is happening

WHAT THEY RECEIVE

Official certificate

Accreditation where appropriate

Short online training

Published credit / byline

Portfolio experience

Reference after defined participation

Could every competition have one volunteer communication ambassador?



At Your Next Competition...

Findable results?

Reliable stream?

On-time finals?

Better seating?

One interview?

Choose one practical improvement — then build from there.



Remember Where We Started

The Olympic Games give fencing a remarkable platform every four years.

What do we give people to follow between those moments?



Every Competition. Every Athlete. Together.

A better spectator experience.

A better interview.

A story that would otherwise go untold.

Federations, clubs, athletes, organisers and EFC already form a communication network.
Small actions across Europe can add up.

How can we use our existing network more effectively — together?



THANK YOU

Let's keep the conversation going.

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