1. Sewer System Publicity

2. Changes in Kitakyushu City Sewer System Publicity

3. Public Relations for Sewer System Diffusion

4. Public Relations for Sewer System Education

5. Public Relations Challenges
1. Sewer System Publicity
Objective of Sewer System Publicity

Challenges for sewer system projects

◆ Difficult for city residents to understand the need for (and effects of) sewer system maintenance

City residents know that sewage is flushed down drains and the like, but are not aware of where it goes afterward.

There are few chances to actually see sewer systems because pipes are buried underground.

Public relations lead to:

• an accurate understanding of sewer systems
• improved awareness of sewer system maintenance
• improved communication with city residents

*To help citizens become good partners with good understanding of sewer system projects...*
Kitakyushu City sewer system publicity
Information distribution and information gathering

- City residents
  - Familiarity with the city government
  - Comfort with the city government
  - Trust in the city government

- City government
  - Easy to gain understanding and cooperation of customers.
  - Better quality services.

Promotion of an open city government

- Promote democratization of city government
- A more human city government
- A more effective city government

Bilateral communication

Information gathering

Information distribution

Trust relationship
(3) Important Points about Sewer System Publicity

1. Clarify targets and objectives
   Envision specifically what kinds of information will be distributed to whom

2. Timely publicity
   Time publicity with project details and schedules
   Envisioned publicity timing
   (1) Plan proposal stage (2) Plan completion stage
   (3) Project launch stage (4) Project implementation stage
   (5) Project completion stage

3. Appropriate methods
   Use the most appropriate media in light of economic efficiency, precision, etc.
   Also important to adopt a cross-media approach
   Things to consider when selecting publicity methods
   • Penetration (reaching people far and wide)
   • Precision (accurate and easy to understand)
   • Brevity (can be communicated in a timely manner)
   • Lasting relevance (can be kept and used again)
   • Economic efficiency (high cost performance)
2. Changes in Kitakyushu City Sewer System Publicity
Changes in Kitakyushu City Sewer System Publicity

The objective of publicity changes over time and according to circumstances.

Before sewer system diffusion

1968

Increased interest in the sewer system
Craving for visual sewage improvement

◆ Sewer system diffusion rate: 16.0%
(of which 52.2% use flush systems)

Seek city residents’ understanding and promote diffusion of the sewer system

After sewer system diffusion

2014

Decreased interest in the sewer system
Taken for granted as it is invisible

◆ Sewer system diffusion rate: 99.8%
(of which 99.4% use flush systems)

Improve city residents’ awareness by disseminating information about importance and diversification of the sewer system
1968

Excerpt from the Murasakigawa River Cleanup Campaign:
“The water near Murasakigawa-bashi Bridge is no different than sewage.”

- At the time, the sewer system diffusion rate for the entire city was 16% and only 3.7% in the Kokura District
- Illegal residences, pig pens and other structures along the river dumped sewage into it

*Publicity stressed the importance of the sewer system and urged prompt connection
“Mayor Toilet” elected on the promise to develop the sewer system (March 1967)

- Mayor Gohei Tani, elected for his promise of sewer system diffusion, leads the development of the sewer system

  The mayor took the initiative to promote the development of the sewer system

- The city council approved the Sewer System User Fee System in 1968.

  Improved awareness among city council members

Garbage piled up (March 1968)

*Publicity urged expansion of sewer system diffusion

  (Financial difficulties at the time forced a dependence on individual public relations and reporting in the newspaper, on TV and in other media)
(3) Since Near-Completion of the Sewer System Project (Recent Years)

- Workshop on sewer system technology (July 2014)
  - Distribute information about the importance and versatility of the sewer system
  - Provided education about sewer systems outside Japan

- Educational activities outside Japan (August 2013)

*Public relations for reminding of the importance of the sewer system, and promoting environmental education, etc.*
3. Public Relations for Sewer System Diffusion
(1) Promoting Understanding of the Fee System

Explained usage fees and the user fee system for healthy project operation and management

◆ Details explained: Usage fees, user fee system, fee collection methods, etc.
◆ Timing: Before sewer system work began
◆ Target audience: Sewer system users
◆ Presenters: Sewer System Administration Division
◆ Method: Used community centers and other public gathering places to host briefings for each neighborhood association.

(20 employees hosted briefings day and night in 100 locations over one month)

Explanation of User Fees (1968)  
A personal visit
Introducing systems related to connection, etc. to promote active use of the sewer system

- Details explained: Introduced the subsidy system, the companies carrying out connection work, etc.
- Timing: From the period before sewer system work began until the system went into service
- Target audience: Sewer system users
- Presenters: Sewer System Administration Division, Business Management Division
- Method: Briefings held at local facilities, personal visits, etc.
(3) Promoting Understanding of Infrastructure Development

◆ Sewer system construction work had a major effect on public life due to traffic, noise, etc.  
   City residents’ understanding and cooperation were vital toward the safe, smooth progression of the work

Host construction work briefings

- Timing: When the project was determined and before work began
- Attendees: Municipal governments, private-sector companies
  (consultancies, construction companies), local residents
- Content: Construction overview, schedules, safety measures, traffic restrictions, presence or absence of vibrations and noise, etc.

*Local residents’ views were reflected in the construction work as necessary
4. Public Relations for Sewer System Education
(1) Host Events for City Residents

Use events to deepen understanding and interest in water and sewer systems

◆ Water Waku-Waku Festival

- Time: Early June
- Location: Mojiko Retro District
- Target audience: City residents
- Content: Panel displays, hands-on demonstrations, etc.

  Host events that whole families can enjoy.

  *Appeal to potential visitors through letters from the city government, TV and radio spots, websites, etc.

◆ Campaign for Sewer System Day

- Time: Around September 10 (Sewer System Day)
- Location: Katsuyama Park
- Target audience: City residents
- Content: Set up a booth at the Murasakigawa River Festival for Sewer System Day PR, participatory events, etc.

  *Appeal to potential visitors through letters from the city government, TV and radio spots, websites, etc.
(2) Educate Children

Support future sewer systems through efforts to educate children about the environment

◆ Issue educational booklets for elementary school students

- Title: Our Water and Sewer Systems
- Circulation: Around 10,000 copies, once per year
- Target audience: Distribute to all third- and fourth-graders in the city
- Content: Use illustrations and pictures to straightforwardly explain the workings and importance of the water and sewer systems

*Ask the Board of Education (teachers) to oversee the writing of the booklet

◆ Parent-and-Child Education

- Time: August (during summer break)
- Target audience: 20 groups of one child and one guardian, total of 40 people
- Content: Parents and children come to a sewage treatment plant to view the sewage treatment process and learn about the importance of the sewer system together.

*Appeal to potential participants through letters from the city government, websites, etc.

For reference: 587 people participated in a sewage treatment plant tour for elementary school students (2013)
Coordinate with PR professionals to promote impactful PR work

◆ Newspapers and TV news

- Press presentations: 26 (2013)
- News items recently reported:
  - Agreement on a memorandum on cooperation and exchange of sewer system technology with Vietnam
  - Requests for sewer system training for Indonesia, etc.

◆ Publish in magazines and trade journals

- Diamond Weekly

  "Vietnam Foreign Water Business: Gradually Promote Win-Win Water Business for All Cities" (2014, 12/6, 12/13 and 12/20 editions)
- Journal of Japan Sewage Works Association (issued by the Japan Sewage Works Association)

  - Creating strategic bases for global water business (2014 Vol. 51 No. 619)
(4) Create Brochures and Websites

Far-reaching PR with timely information

◆ Various brochures and pamphlets

• Major PR brochures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Content</th>
<th>Circulation, target audience</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Water and Sewer Bureau business overview</td>
<td>Introduce business for the current fiscal year</td>
<td>Once per year, 800 copies For publicity and training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facility overview</td>
<td>Introduce the bureau’s facilities</td>
<td>Once per year, 1,400 copies For distribution to facility tour members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kitakyushu City Water and Sewer Systems</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PR brochure</td>
<td>Publish the bureau’s efforts and notifications to city residents</td>
<td>Once per year, 330,000 copies For distribution to all households in the city</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water and Sewer Systems in Daily Life</td>
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</tbody>
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◆ Water and Sewer Bureau website

• Hits: 80,124/year (2013)

• Content: Introduction of operations, financial reports, environmental accounting reports, event information, FAQ, contact information, etc.
(5) Information Gathering 1

Improved communication with sewer system users

◆ Water and sewer system monitors
  • Duration: Around one year
  • Target: 50 people living within city limits
  • Content: Provide four workshops and facility tours throughout the year, then hold a meeting to exchange opinions about the city’s water and sewer system operations.

*Appeal to potential participants through letters from the city government, websites, etc.

◆ Water and Sewer System Customer Service Center
  • Established: 2004 (outsourced to a private company)
  • Nature of work: Receive inquiries and complaints from city residents
  • Organization: A maximum of 19 operators handle customer communication.
  • Contract amount: Around 43 million yen/year
  • Telephone call volume: Around 150,000 calls/year

*Service improved by combining the liaison for both complaints and inquiries
Dealing with city residents’ needs

Sincere response to city residents’ needs

Complaints and inquiries from customers

- Inquiry forms on the city and bureau websites
- Calls to the customer service center
- Direct visits to the Water and Sewer Bureau
* Aim to respond within two weeks

Confirm facts
Investigate causes

- People in charge confirm and investigate

Propose resolutions and improvement measures

- People in charge respond to the customer by email or telephone
- Verify the problem and inform bureau employees

Reference: Frequent complaints and inquiries

- Water and sewer system usage fees are too high
- Can a credit card be used for payment?
- Sewage is overflowing into a river
- When will rainwater drainage be improved?
- Traffic is horrible because construction work is taking too long
- Fear that someone impersonating a city employee or worker hired by the city will visit under the pretext of an inspection and swindle money
5. Public Relations Challenges
Public Relations Challenges

Past PR work:

Releasing reports of results, notifications, etc.

City residents
Receivers of information and services

City government
Providers of information and services

*One-way information dissemination

Future PR work:

City government and city residents work together to create new value

City residents
Sewer system users

City government
Sewer system operators

*Mutual exchange of information

PR work must be carried out in conjunction with whatever ways are needed to communicate in order to build a virtuous circle of trust
Thank you for listening.

The rejuvenated Murasakigawa River (2012)