European Union The European Regional Development Fund

The Interreg IVB North Sea Region Programme

LEAD BENEFICIARY III

[PARALLEL SESSIONS – COMMUNICATIONS]

PART 1

30 September 2009, Antwerp, Belgium

Henrik Josephson & Stefanie Bischof
North Sea Region Programme Secretariat

Information versus communication

Commission: INFORMATION through TRANSPARENCY

TECHNICAL

Billboards and Plaques, Lists of Beneficiaries, etc.

Our suggestion: COMMUNICATION through INVOLVEMENT

NON-TECHNICAL

Addressing the added-values of efficient communications.

The Communication Plan, 1

IT IS THE MANUAL FOR COMMUNICATIONS.

- All the steps and chapters are connected,
- The set-up is generic.

Google hits this morning (30 September, 06.30):

• Communication plan template	3.640.000
• Communication plan how to	667.000.000
• Communication planning	1.690.000.000
• Sex	594.000.000

The Communication Plan, 2

WHAT IS YOU WANT TO DO, REALLY?

The aim is the what:

1. Raise awareness of issue?
2. Change opinion?
3. Change behaviour?

The Communication Plan, 3

... AND CONSIDER THIS:

Without a relevant budget it is impossible to assess the plan and very difficult make the case towards management,

Without concrete measures the plan will not convince people in your organisation that it matters and there is a risk the entire plan will fall apart,

The Communication Plan, 4

... There are relevant objectives and... not so strong ones...

YES – relevant, correspond to overall project aim and concrete:

- Increase public awareness of IT entreprenurial project in NSR,
- Get regional politicians to support contruction of small scale wind farms.

NO – relevance questionable, weak connection to project aim, vague and abstract:

- Meet project aim,
- Specify list of target groups to increase publicity efficiency,
- Achieve press coverage for project.

The Communication Plan, 5

HOW ABOUT A MESSAGE?

Finding the message by asking the right questions (as concrete as possible):

1. What does your project do?
2. Why do you do this?
3. Why is it important?

Case Study – Build with Care [BwC]

KEY ISSUES AND LESSONS LEARNED.

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.
7.

CI / BRANDING: BASIC CONCEPTS

WHO ARE YOU IN THE MIND OF YOUR TARGET GROUPS? WHO WOULD YOU LIKE TO BE?

Profile – Image: Does the message fit with what you offer?

Message – Product/Service: Are you who you think you are?

Vision – Potential: Where would you like to be, can you get there?

In marketing, a corporate identity is the "persona" of a corporation which is designed to accord with and facilitate the attainment of business objectives. It is usually visibly manifested by way of branding and the use of trademarks. (Wikipedia, English language version, 30 September 2009)

www.logoorange.com

COMMISSIONING A CORPORATE IDENTITY

KEEP IT BASIC AND MAKE SURE IT IS PROFESSIONAL IN STANDARDS.

Key

The identity is the framework sorrounding the logo.

Basic pointers

Consider external expertise for the ground work,

Do not over extend CI work – keep it basic,

Go for template solutions which can be exported and used by non-professionals,

Make sure the graphical elements and the logo works well in analog as well as digital environments, as well as in black/white.

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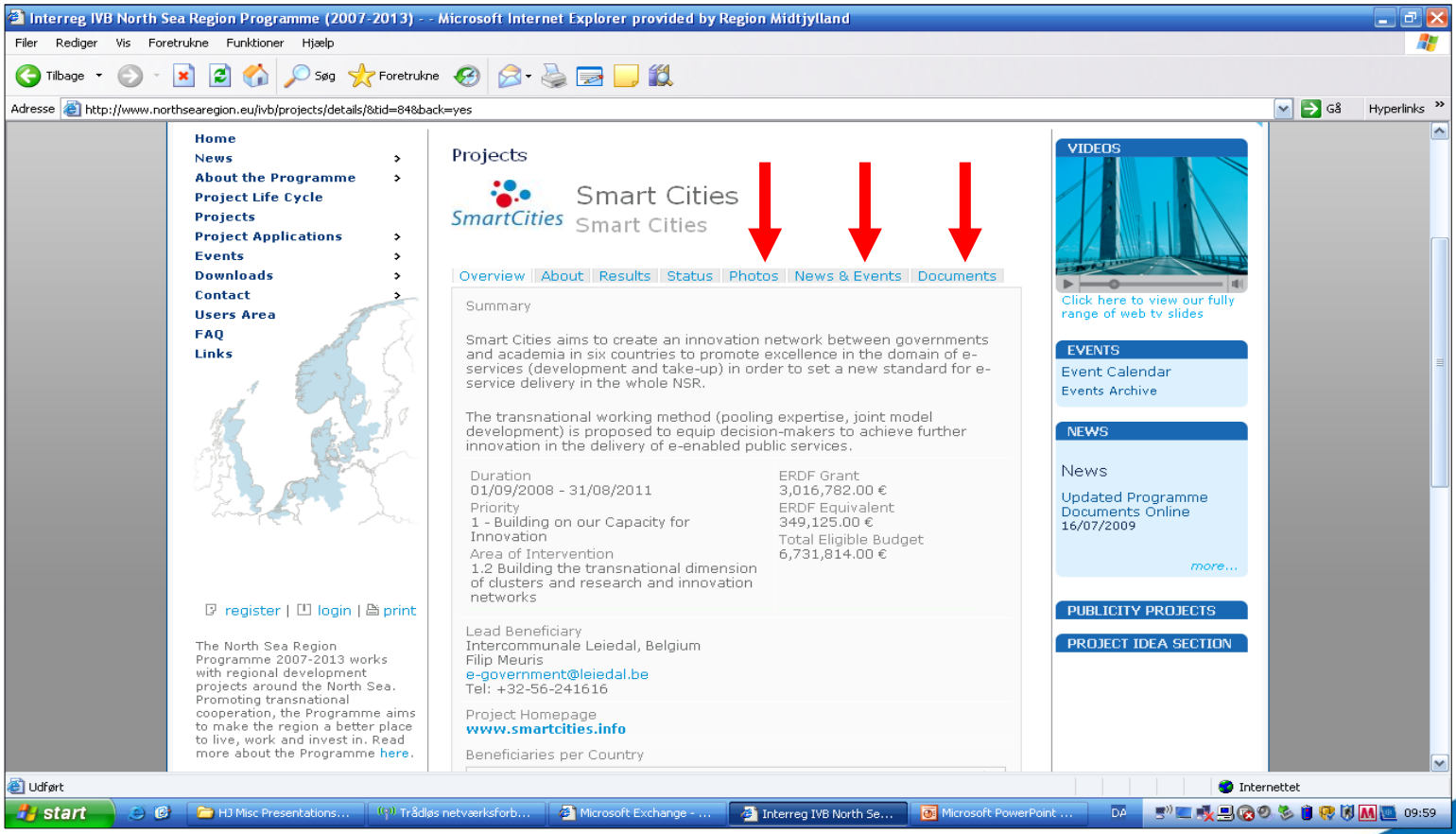
The Programme website as a com platform



Investing in the future by working together for a sustainable and competitive region

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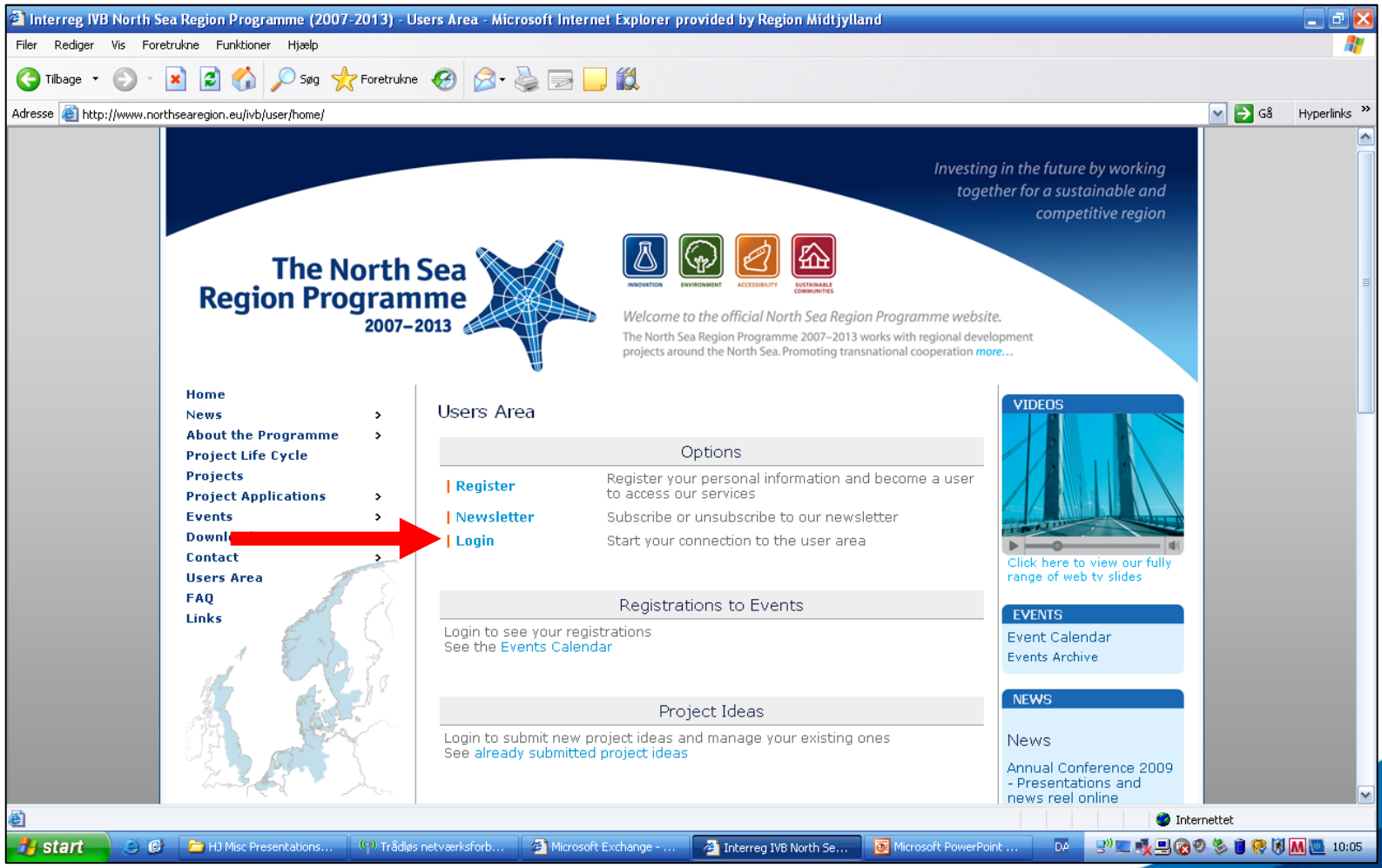

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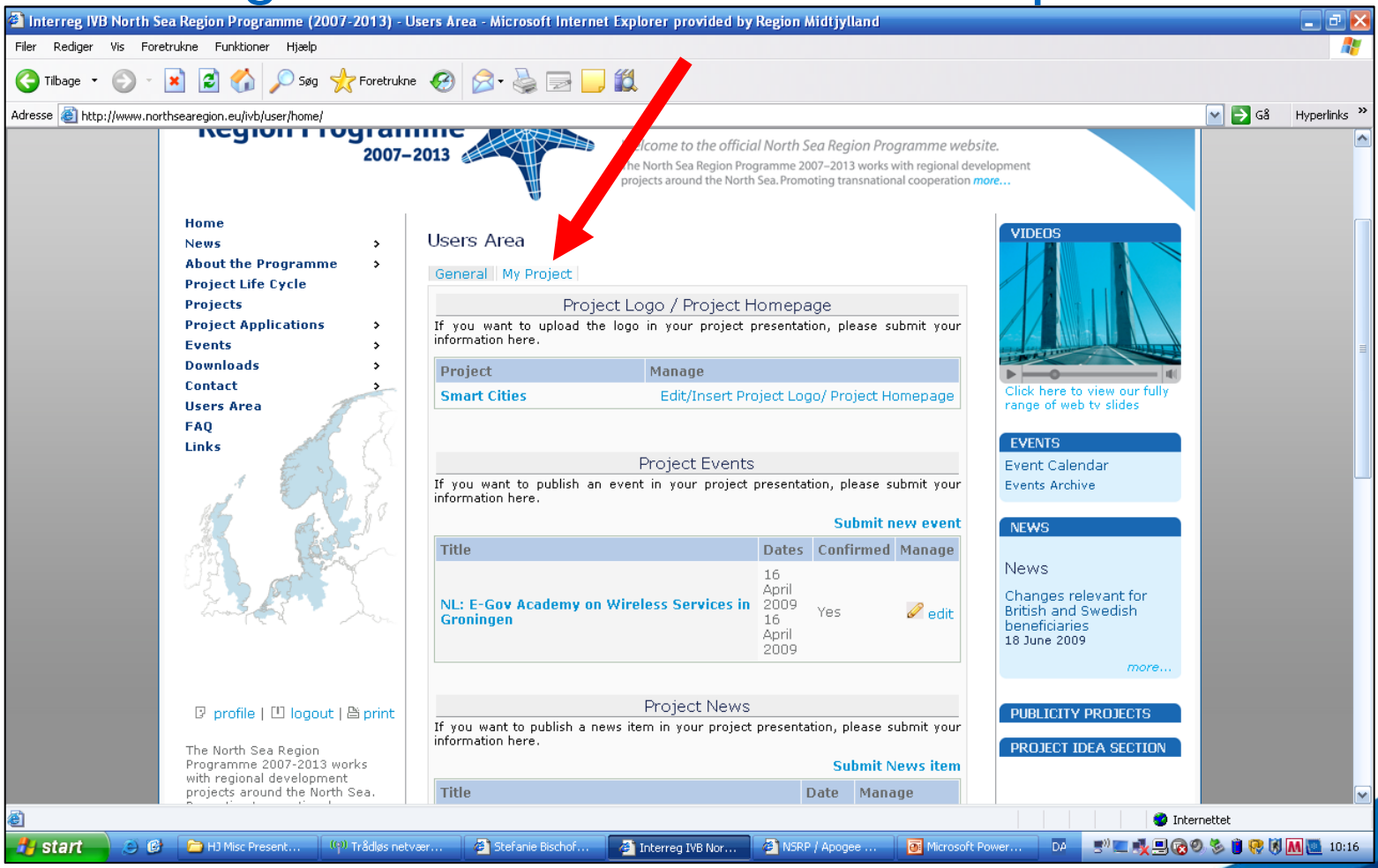

The Programme website as com platform

PROMOTE YOUR PROJECT VIA THE PROGRAMME WEBSITE

- Editable parts of the project presentation:
  - Logo, website address, news, events, photos, documents
- The project is assigned to ONE project representative
- Steps to take:
  - Decide who will be responsible
  - Create a user account
  - Send an email to the Secretariat
  - The Secretariat will assign the project to your account
  - Get started!

Session 1 - WORKSHOP

Project Acronym:	Answer: YES/NO	Answer: YES/NO
Communications aim	Realistic and achievable?	Fits with project aim?
Main message	Relevant for project aim?	Will support project aim?
Main target group?	Can you reach them?	Is this group the most relevant one for your aim?

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Project Communication Plans - Assessment

We need to remember: Giant step forward since last programme period!

Good: General awareness is rising.

Common mistake: Budget missing and connection between budget and measures not clear.

Also common mistake: Too abstract.

- **No**: ”We will generate interest and brand the project.”
- **Yes**: ”We will send rotten eggs to people by mail to generate awereness of... And by connecting this action to the project increase brand recognition...”

NEW MEDIA? [YES, OF COURSE YOU KNOW THIS...]

NEW MEDIA IS A WIDELY USED TERM FOR WEB BASED MEDIA TOOLS AND TECHNOLOGIES.

Key characteristics

Digital,

Computerised and/or, Networked.

Another important new media concept: WEB 2.0

User-designed and/or made,

User-controlled,

Interactive.

WHY NEW MEDIA?

BECAUSE IT IS THE ONLY WAY FORWARD!

WHY?

- All media is moving towards the web and subsequent platforms (the web will continue to out-grow and out-revenue traditional media,
- This is where the audience is – print materials are a waste of money and time (it seems cheaper only at first glance),
- Cost effectiveness over time (multi-purpose, cheap distribution, gets cheaper with integration between platforms and functions),
- Sustainability,
- Archive purposes (easy to store, you have the copyright for films etc),
- Has Programme AND Project value (both can use the products if done right).

THE MOST COMMON EXCUSE

No understanding from management - No money, No time… (Not a valid excuse: This is your job!)

NEW MEDIA – LINK TO COMMUNICATION PLAN

Web based communication

Make the web your main platform for all communications.

Support website by printed materials and e-communications

Print by Just in Time and Print on Demand (sustainable and cost-efficient),

Be very restrictive with e-communications (do not waste other peoples time with Newsletters and Press Releases if not relevant and target group specific).

Target group identification is a key factor for effective communications – you cannot be everything for everyone

(Potential) Beneficiaries,

Other stakeholders,

The Commission,

General Public.

NEW MEDIA – WRITING FOR THE WEB

THE FOLLOWING IS TRUE FOR WEB TEXTS - YOU MUST ADOPT THE STYLE AND TONE TO THE SPECIFIC MEDIA YOU INTEND TO USE.

People don't read online texts, they scan them!

In order to make texts more accessible:

Start with the conclusion,
Use headings and sub headings,
Use headings that make sense.

Write concise

Wording

Objective (emotional online writing is for amateurs – no credibility),
Plain English (or any other language, no EU speak).

NEW MEDIA – EFFECTIVE AND RELEVANT

A FEW KEY POINTS ABOUT WEB BASED COMMUNICATIONS, ALSO RELEVANT FOR OTHER WEB 2.0 MEDIA OPTIONS.

Customised to target audience(s)

Information available – Who are you talking to?
Way of communicating stories – Communicate, do not inform!
Features – What features are relevant for your audience?

User friendliness

Usability – Relevant things first, i.e. news visible!
Accessibility – You have 5-8 seconds, then the visitor leaves
Content Management System – should be user friendly
Writing style – writing for the web is different, learn it

SELECTED NEW MEDIA

IT IS EASY TO BE CHARMED BY THE POSSIBILITIES, BUT ARE YOU AWARE OF THE CHALLENGES?

Website / Web Based – The revolution will be web-based, but you need to know how to write for the web,

Videos – Effective but you need determining competence,

Streaming / Podcasting – Potentially very good penetration, but high risk if do not know the target groups very well,

Internet Radio – Not likely a viable option (do you have enough content and the funding to back a serious effort?),

Open Forum / Blogs – Cheap and easy to start but time consuming to maintain: constant updates or you loose audience and credibility quickly,

Web 2.0 / Social Media – you need to monitor what happens with your contributions.

NEW VERSUS OLD MEDIA

YOU NEED TO BE AWARE THAT THERE ARE CHARACTERISTICS THAT SEPARATE NEW MEDIA FROM OTHER MEDIA.

CHEAP AND FAST BUT TRICKY

Many new media options are tempting because they are cheap, easy to use and fast. But they demand much more in maintenance (e.g. updates).

TARGET GROUP SPECIFIC

Social and interactive media (web 2.0) is much more target group specific and fast changing than other media options – do not underestimate the pace or the need to be specific.

NEW MEDIA – MAIN POINTS

GENERAL

1. WHY – Because print materials are a waste of money and time,
2. HOW – by setting money aside and building it into the overall strategy.

NEW MEDIA

1. Is the way forward, but challenges apply,
2. Is cost effective and very efficient once produced,
3. Must be part of a Communication Plan – never ad hoc!

PR – THE ART OF STORYTELLING

THINK LIKE A JOURNALIST – WHERE IS THE STORY?

- Make it interesting (current media topic, ambassadors),
- Keep it short and to the point (think soundbite),
- Tell a story people want to hear (emotions & feelings),
- Find a connection to people (news are stories about people for other people).

Remember: every journalist wants a story he can sell!

PR – THE TOOLS

THERE ARE MANY TOOLS, USE THEM WISELY.

- Press releases (Social Media Press Release – SHIFT)
- Briefings
- Interviews
- Press conferences
- Press trips
- Case studies
- Features
- Avoid: Advertorials

Remember: every journalist wants a story he can sell!

Case Study – Cradle to Cradle Islands [C2CI]

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www.buildwithcare.eu

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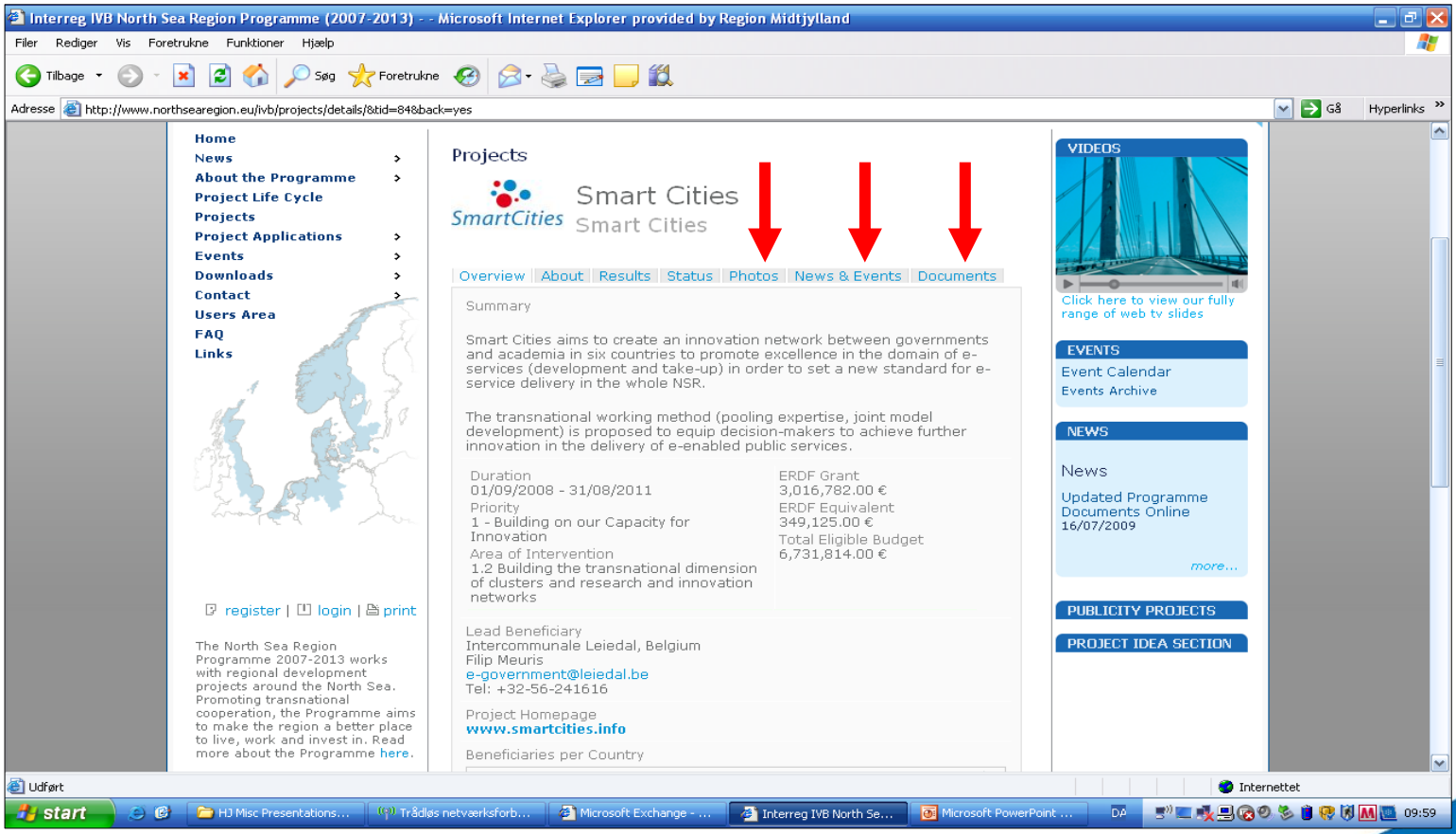

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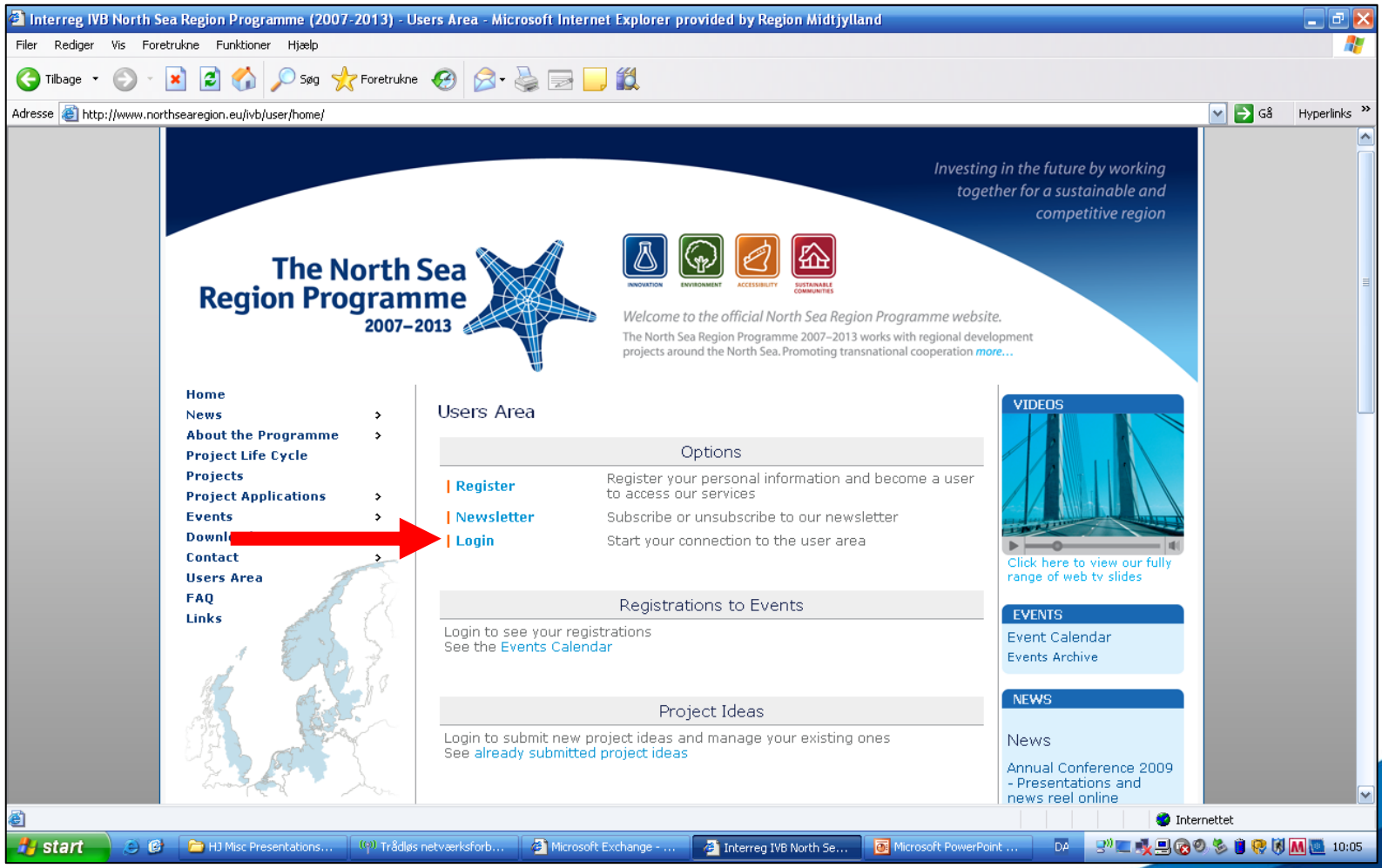

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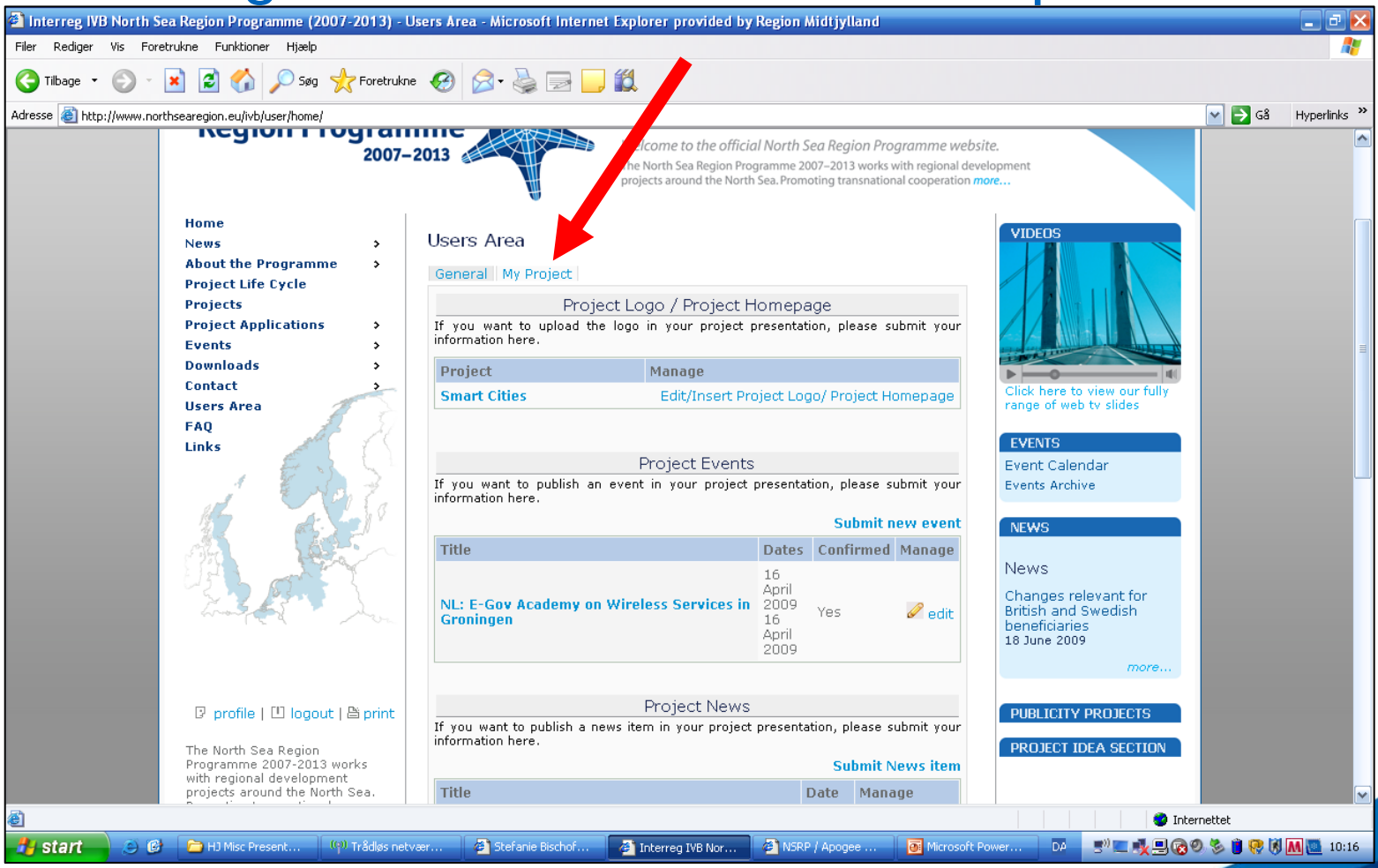

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Session 2 - WORKSHOP

Project Acronym:	Answer: YES/NO	Answer: YES/NO
Main channel for com?	Relevant for your project?	Fits with project aim?
Main PR tool?	Effective for who you want to reach?	Will support project aim?
Write a story around your message	Is it interesting?	Does it sell your message?

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