Deliverable Report

Deliverable Title:

Best Practices for Communication & Dissemination Activities

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[1] PU = Public
PP = Restricted to other programme participants (including the Commission Services)
RE = Restricted to a group specified by the consortium (including the Commission Services)
CO = Confidential, only for members of the consortium (including the Commission Services)

The project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 101003785

Technical References

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Summary

This report reviews general communication and dissemination best practices and how they applied in the EU-funded SALEMA project. It provides three key examples of SALEMA successes, along with tips and recommendations for anyone conducting similar work.

The activities described were carried out within SALEMA work package (WP) 9 by all project partners, coordinated by ESCI, and in accord with the strategic *'Communication and Dissemination Master Plan' (Deliverable report D9.1)* produced in project month 3.

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Disclaimer

Abbreviations

Abbreviation / Acronyms	Description
CRM	Critical Raw Material
EAA	European Aluminium
EC	European Commission
EU	European Union
EV	Electric Vehicle
WP	Work Package

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1. Introduction and Background

For any project communication to succeed, it's crucial for audiences (readers / viewers etc.) to know in broad terms what the project is about. They also need to understand the key message and purpose of the communication action itself. If this is all conveyed in a way that resonates with them—on a personal / professional / business level—striking them as relevant to their own goals and engaging their interest so that they find out more, the communicator has achieved the first step towards the immediate goal, which is that the audience takes some kind of action. This may be clicking the link in a social media post, or registering to participate in an announced event, or following up on discussions with contacts met during the project's event. But it's also a step towards achieving the bigger-picture ambitions that are the strategic or policy backdrop for the project.

In this way, a well-crafted social media post at one end of the scale up to a large, carefully planned and multi-element event at the other end of the scale can equally be considered as part of the overall project storytelling. And they can equally be appraised to learn what works best and why.

In this report, we review general communication and dissemination best practices and how they applied in the EU-funded SALEMA project. We also provide three key examples of SALEMA successes along with tips and recommendations for anyone conducting similar work.

These activities were carried out within SALEMA work package (WP) 9 by all project partners, coordinated by ESCI, and in accord with the strategic *'Communication and Dissemination Master Plan' (Deliverable report D9.1)* produced in project month 3.

1.1. What's the topic to be communicated?

As any project progresses, new insights, activities, results or other specific developments can arise, which may require specific communication and dissemination actions to be taken. However, the core aims remain the same, even if they can be described in ever more certain terms as the communication moves from talking about what will happen, to what has been achieved. The core project goals and objectives therefore provide a solid base and benchmark for the constellation of actions to be taken throughout the project lifespan, helping to build a consistent and compelling context and narrative.

By the time of SALEMA's end on 30 April 2024, SALEMA's core storyline and achievements could be distilled as follows:

- **SALEMA brought together partners from around the aluminium value chain.**
- **Collaboration across the aluminium value chain was a critical ingredient for SALEMA's success.**
- **SALEMA developed and demonstrated a circular economy model for aluminium recyclers, producers and users such as the automotive sector.**
- **Together SALEMA partners:**
    - **improved scrap sorting technologies to rapidly target and separate multiple target types of aluminium scrap;**
    - **designed new alloys that could still work in standard industrial processes while containing higher levels of scrap or lower amounts of critical raw materials (silicon and magnesium);**

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    - **created and tested the qualities of the SALEMA alloys for use in standard industrial processes—extrusion, high-pressure die casting, hot and cold stamping;**
    - **used SALEMA alloys in the manufacture of electric vehicle (EV) structural parts, testing that the parts performed in terms of strength, corrosion resistance and so on.**
- **SALEMA's results contribute to European Union ambitions to:**
    - **reduce reliance on (primary) critical raw material imports from other world regions, as a strategic goal;**
    - **increase the use of end-of-life, post-consumer aluminium scrap as part of a circular economy within Europe, boosting (more localised) industry;**
    - **increase the supply of recycled aluminium for (electric) vehicles, with the additional benefit that lighter weight makes vehicles more efficient, affecting costs and environmental impacts;**
    - **reduce the environmental impacts of materials imports, waste exports, primary aluminium production and automotive industries.**

2. Telling the story to the right people

For communication to be successful, the audience's needs must be addressed. In SALEMA's case, the audiences that could benefit from the project activities and results were described in detail in *D9.1* and summarised as three main target groups: 1) the automotive industry, 2) other relevant industries, engineers and researchers, 3) policy makers and the general public.

Because the SALEMA consortium included representatives of the whole aluminium manufacturing value chain, they could provide insights as to the relevant concerns, interests and needs of these sectors, ensuring that SALEMA's communications addressed these points in a relevant way.

Furthermore, partners' communication networks, social media channels and participation in events all helped in dissemination of the project messages and reach to specific relevant audiences. As with any project, therefore, ensuring that consortium members are equipped—in terms of understanding, skills and content—to provide such communication and dissemination support, was essential to successful awareness raising and paving the way for ultimate uptake of the project's solutions. Remember that the partners are also an important target audience in that sense!

One significant advantage for SALEMA in reaching its target audiences was the participation of European Aluminium (EAA) in the project consortium. This European association itself represents the entire aluminium value chain in Europe, and its already-established Innovation Hub and Automotive and Transport group provided ready networks of relevant individuals and organisations who were interested in SALEMA's activities, events and developments.

2.1. Automotive

This group of SALEMA target audiences includes aluminium part manufacturers, automotive industry suppliers and complete car manufacturers, among others.

As the automotive sector seeks greater sustainability—both in its production methods and materials and in the efficiency of its products—policy aspects, the market and technology perspectives all come into play. Driving towards greater use of aluminium, which weighs 60% less than steel but is more

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energy-consuming to produce from primary raw materials, and balancing this against the need to use less imported critical raw materials and/or to use more recycled content but still remain able to ensure the quality, durability and ultimately the safety of its products, is an increasingly pressing issue.

To address these concerns and set the project's contributions in a relevant context, SALEMA delivered updates and insights about:

- **post-shredding technologies and methodologies to improve scrap quality and availability for recycling specifically for the automotive industry;**
- **development of new aluminium alloys using end-of-life recycled scrap or less CRMs for automotive applications, e.g lighter weight battery packs;**
- **innovative design considerations, e.g. for low carbon footprint aluminium EV battery housings;**
- **insights into industrial processes that ensure the quality of recycled aluminium alloys for automotive use;**
- **the need for increased dismantling before shredding and other automotive industry design changes that would support improved recycling and circularity;**
- **examples of strategic shifts by automotive companies to enhance sustainability throughout their operations, emphasising aluminium, recycling and collaboration with suppliers and recyclers as essential to advance circular economy principles within the sector.**

These messages were delivered through the presentation of case studies, explanatory content, multimedia materials, examples of collaboration and successes, printed materials and discussions, primarily during a series of online and offline events organised by EAA, but also through relevant externally organised events such as trade fairs (e.g. NeMMo, New Materials for future Mobility), and conferences where automotive was a focus (e.g. INALCO 2023 on 'Green Aluminium for Transportation and Infrastructure'). See event details in *D9.7 report on scientific and technological dissemination*.

In addition, videos from some of the SALEMA events were made available and ESCI gathered detailed partner inputs to create infographics, factsheets, web content, news outputs and social media posts reflecting key developments and outcomes. Of particular relevance to this target group are:

- **Factsheet: 'SALEMA alloys meet industry needs', standalone version of the related infographic;**
- **Web content about the demonstrator solutions: Shock Tower; Frontal Frame; Body in White; B-Pillar; Battery Box;**
- **Web content about the overall project results and demonstrator results;**
- **Final event session video: 'Policy Challenges & Opportunities in Expanding Recycled Aluminium in Electric Vehicles';**
- **Final event session video: 'Design for Circularity in the Automotive Sector: Strategies for Improved Sustainability';**
- **Final event session presentations;**
- **Webinar 'The Circular Metal for Future Mobility' news summary and video;**
- **Quickfire interviews with SALEMA partners:**
    - **Juan José Matarranz, Technology and Innovation Manager, Gestamp (video and article);**

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  - **Andrea Bongiovanni, PhD Researcher, Centro Ricerche Fiat (video and article);**
  - **Robert Baudinet, Research Engineer, University of Liège (video and article);**
  - **Ruggero Zambelli, Quality Manager, Raffmetal (article)**
- **Quickfire interviews with external comentators:**
  - **Benedetta Nucci, Senior Manager: Mobility & Life Cycle Assessment, European Aluminium (video and article);**
  - **Geoff Scamans, Senior Manager: Mobility & Life Cycle Assessment, European Aluminium (video and article);**
  - **Martin Tauber, European Representative of International Magnesium Association & President of Critical Raw Materials Alliance (video and article)**

In addition, some of the deliverable reports and final event session presentations that ESCI published on the project website are also relevant.

2.2. Other industries, engineers, researchers

As this grouping includes a much greater variety of specific target audiences—e.g. industrial engineering companies and researchers, robotic engineers and manufacturers, metallurgists and the aluminium recycling industry—there is an equally varied set of messages emerging from SALEMA that are relevant to their interests.

Some of the key project outcomes that are relevant include:

- **the development of a methodology to 'design' low-CRM and high-recycled content alloys and predict their performance in industrial processes — which can be also applied to other metals and industries and additionally provides new tools and knowledge for academia;**
- **SALEMA's development and application of a novel AI algorithm and 'LIBS' (laser-induced breakdown spectroscopy) technologies to industrial aluminium scrap sorting;**
- **the significantly increased recovery of targeted aluminium alloy families for recycling for specific industry needs, which potentially expands (local) markets for recyclers and reduces the export of waste;**
- **the definition of pre-treatment required to prepare recovered end-of-life scrap for high-quality aluminium smelting, maximising efficiency and profitability of the process.**

Again, the relevant messages were communicated through the events SALEMA organised and participated in, for example the bi-annual Aluminium Exhibition in Düsseldorf, the EUROMAT congress for advancements in materials science, and MECSPE trade fair for the manufacturing industry. Also, SALEMA partners contributed a number of scientific articles and presentations to journals and academic events, as well as PhD theses that helped move forward knowledge in the relevant fields. *See D9.7 for details.* Ensuring these are available on an open-source platform such as Zenodo as well as the project website and promoting them via project dissemination channels is also good practice.

In addition, some of the SALEMA event videos and materials created by ESCI are of particular relevance to this group of audiences:

- **Factsheet: 'SALEMA designs new, sustainable, high-performance aluminium alloys' and standalone version of the related infographic;**

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- **Factsheet: 'SALEMA improves recycling for sustainable high-performance aluminium' and standalone version of the related infographic;**
- **Web content about the overall project results and results of the alloy design, improved recycling, demonstrators;**
- **Final event session video: 'The SALEMA Project Journey: Main Outcomes, Challenges and Possibilities';**
- **Final event session video: 'Empowering Europe's Green Transition: The Crucial Role of Critical Raw Materials';**
- **Final event session video: 'Aluminium Recycling: Enhancing Quality for a Sustainable Future';**
- **Final event session video: 'Leveraging EU Innovation: From Horizon Project to Market Impact';**
- **Webinar 'The Circular Metal for Future Mobility' news summary and video;**
- **Quickfire interviews (as above);**
- **Journalistic articles published in various specialist online magazines and other outlets.**

In addition, some of the deliverable reports and final event session presentations that ESCI published on the project website are also relevant.

2.3. Policymakers, general public

While the 'general public' is an extremely broad term and arguably this is only really an incidental audience for SALEMA messages, it is those messages relating to the project's overall environmental and circular economy goals that are most of interest. For policymakers such as national authorities, standardisation committees and European institutions such as the European Commission, these topics are also the main areas of interest, along with how these areas interact with policy issues, regulation, investment, planning and the public interest.

For these audiences, some of the most relevant key project results and messages are:

- **SALEMA's advances in scrap-sorting technology can be applied for the sorting and recycling of other metals and materials;**
- **by boosting scrap recycling to meet local and high-performance industry needs, SALEMA helps stimulate European industries and markets as well as contributing to reduced environmental impacts of waste exports, critical raw material extraction and transportation, and the energy-consuming primary production of aluminium;**
- **by demonstrating that aluminium alloys with higher recycled and lower CRM content can meet industrial processing needs and the high-performance requirements of the automotive industry, SALEMA helps enable the development of lighter weight and more environmentally friendly electric vehicles, contributing to the achievement or European policies in these areas;**
- **SALEMA's approach of bringing together players from across the aluminium value chain to collaborate on mutually beneficial solutions has succeeded and is an approach that should be widely used in other sectors and to address other challenges;**

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- **SALEMA's approach to design, validate and use low-CRM / high recycled content alloys could be replicated for other kinds of metals and their application in other industries and products, widening the value and benefit the project could ultimately deliver.**

These messages were highlighted to policymakers who participated in the various online and offline events organised by SALEMA, and through SALEMA's participation in externally organised events in collaboration with 'sister projects' to combine and strengthen messages about areas of common concern. These interactions are described in full in deliverable report *D9.8 'Report on the interaction with other EU projects and EC events'*.

In addition, the following SALEMA materials created by ESCI are of particular relevance in conveying the overall benefits or policy-related aspects of the project activities and results:

- **The SALEMA overview presented in the brochure, poster, rollup banner;**
- **The SALEMA overview presented simply and attractively across the website, in particular content about the project, its circular economy aims, the project results and benefits as well as easy to understand news and quickfire interviews;**
- **Introductory video: 'Driving Sustainable Aluminium - The Future of Electric Mobility';**
- **Final video: 'Old Scrap New Alloys: Aluminium Recycling and Reducing Dependence on Critical Raw Materials'**
- **Final event session video: 'Policy Challenges & Opportunities in Expanding Recycled Aluminium in Electric Vehicles';**
- **Final event session video: 'Empowering Europe's Green Transition: The Crucial Role of Critical Raw Materials';**
- **Final event session video: 'Aluminium Recycling: Enhancing Quality for a Sustainable Future';**
- **Final event session video: 'Leveraging EU Innovation: From Horizon Project to Market Impact'.**

In addition, some of the deliverable reports and final event session presentations that ESCI published on the project website are also relevant.

2.4. Project partners

To equip consortium members to fulfil their commitments to support project communication and dissemination actions in WP9:

- **ESCI provided partner training sessions** on: 1) general communication best practices, with a main focus on social media; 2) storytelling in short-form communication (e.g. 'elevator pitches') to support exploitation of final results.
- **ESCI shared materials (e.g. brochure, rollup banner, poster) and other content** via SALEMA's SharePoint, website and social media channels for onward dissemination by partners;
- **Eurecat ensured partners could align on project updates,** messages etc. through emails, monthly and General Assembly meetings, as part of the internal communications approach defined in deliverable report D10.1, the 'SALEMA Project Handbook'.

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3. SALEMA successes and recommendations

Four SALEMA communication tools proved to be the most successful:

1. **Sister project alliance**
2. **The final video**
3. **The final event**
4. **Online presence – website & social media**

3.1. Success Story 1 – Sister project alliance

MAIN C&D 'WINS' – SALEMA SISTER PROJECT ALLIANCE

- Network of 'friendly faces' to share C&D ideas, cross-promotion, event speakers etc;
- 60 participants at SALEMS-organised webinar to cross-fertilise with and highlight sister projects;
- SALEMA visibility in sister projects' events.

In the early months of the project, SALEMA mapped other EU-funded projects whose objectives and focus areas were relevant–primarily those centred around EVs, with a particular focus on recycling. They explored potential synergies and opportunities for knowledge exchange and mutual communication and dissemination support.

14 projects were mapped, of which SALEMA had direct, active interactions with 7: Fatigue4Light, FLAMINGo, Flexcrash, MARBEL, AUSOM, IPCEI Batteries and, towards the end of the project, PASSENGER.

TIP: FIND EACH OTHER IN EU PLATFORMS

Sister projects funded under the same programme and with the same topic can be found on the CORDIS website https://cordis.europa.eu.

The Horizon Results Booster also gives guidance to identify similar ongoing projects from any other EU, national or regional funding initiatives: www.horizonresultsbooster.eu/.

The main mode of interaction was through participation in each other's project organised events, predominantly in the form of workshops. These served as platforms to share technological, financial, social, and policy expertise among stakeholders from various sectors including industry, academia, policy-making and the general public. These interactions enhanced the visibility of collaborative

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efforts, raised awareness about the issues surrounding the recycling of aluminium for automotive uses, and establishing connections with pertinent European networks.

Through these contacts, SALEMA had opportunities for further inter-project networking, with SALIENT, LIFE-INSPIREE, DIGIECOQUARRY, HARMONY, REEsilience, NEW-RE, RESILEX, REEPRODUCE and EXPSKILLS.

Such collaborative exchanges with other EU projects:

- **enrich the knowledge base**
- **fostering synergies between them and with related industry and other stakeholders**
- **facilitate exchange of insights, methodologies and best practices**
- **facilitate cooperation on relevant communication and dissemination actions.**

Sometimes, clusters of projects agree to a collective name and branding, in order to promote themselves in ways they may not succeed in alone. They may then create shared tools such as an interactive map of all the projects, a shared newsletter, or even set up a collective account on social media channels under the cluster name and brand, and cooperate to share the workload. As one project within the cluster comes to an end, it may be replaced by a newer cluster working in the same area, so helping to keep the bigger-picture contextual issues visible in the longer term. As SALEMA was coming to its end, such more formal clustering was beginning to take shape under the leadership of PASSENGER, to be named 'Sustainable CRMs4EU'. SALEMA participated in two cluster calls, contributing to the C&D discussions, and helped boost promotion on social media.

Figure 1: SALEMA participation in 2nd sister projects cluster meeting, as promoted on social media

TIP: SENSE-CHECK CLUSTER C&D ACTIVITIES
Designing, launching and promoting a new social media channel or newsletter can take a lot of work, as well as then 'feeding' it with content and ensuring consistency across all the contributing projects in the cluster.
- Are any of the projects required to provide a newsletter as part of their Grant Agreement and could they take the lead?
- How will you reflect the look & feel or other aspects of the differing cluster projects in the common branding?
- What tools will be used, and how do they and a joint approach to growing a mailing list

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work with regard to EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) compliance?
- How will the editorial planning and production be scheduled and completed?
- Will your new C&D tool be worth the effort, or only compete with your project's own or other pre-existing channels and publications and deter fellow projects from sharing the content?

But, if you succeed, could the new tool help to provide visibility and impact for your project objectives and results long after it ends?

Although organising events is quite labour intensive, it is one communication tool that usually pays off. SALEMA organised four events for a variety of target audiences, attracting more than 340 participants all together. The webinar 'The Circular Metal for Future Mobility', held on 6 October 2023, showcased ground-breaking research developments in aluminium and advanced materials from FLAMINGo, Flexcrash and Fatigue4Light, as well as from SALEMA. This project cross-fertilisation event attracted around 60 participants.

Figure 2: Social media graphic to promote SALEMA project cross-fertilisation webinar of 6 October 2023

To promote this SALEMA event, ESCI produced social media graphics to announce the event, registration, topics and speakers. A summary news report with linked slides was published on the project website and the video recording was made available via YouTube and the project Resources page.

More details in deliverable report *D9.8 'Report on the interaction with other EU projects and EC events'.*

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ADVANTAGES OF PROJECT CLUSTERING

- More 'eyes' to spot opportunites such as externally-organised events where the cluster could be represented by one or more of the projects;
- Share C&D ideas, planning and tasks – not just technical knowledge and best practices;
- Pool resources / effort to get 'more bang for your buck' in terms of 'meta-messages', shared communication tools and actions, wider reach, visibility and impact than may be able to achieve alone;
- Act as a collective voice for a common sector or in a common cause.

3.2. Success story 2: Final video

MAIN C&D 'WINS' – FINAL VIDEO

- Project participants, activities and results set in wider societal context;
- Storytelling approach succeeded in producing an engaging product;
- Video publicly available across 6 platforms;
- Almost 5K views in first few weeks, 6200 by project end;
- Ongoing availability supports longer-term project impact.

The SALEMA final video 'Old Scrap New Alloys: Aluminium Recycling and Reducing Dependence on Critical Raw Materials' was produced in the last months of the project. It targets stakeholders at large so that they can identify, understand and begin to apply the project's results.

Figure 3: Final video thumbnail image created for publication online

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Using a storytelling approach to highlight the three key areas of activity and their results—alloy design, improved recycling and the creation of demonstration car parts—the video combined on-site footage of industrial processes, laboratory testing and partner interviews, as well as short animations of the project's circular economy and demo car parts infographics, to explain and engage the viewer.

The video was released on 14 March 2024 in the SALEMA playlist in ESCI's YouTube channel: https://youtu.be/eS7meZutnNo?si=1G6RoF0cr_0NJRpJ.

TIP: USE AN ESTABLISHED (YOUTUBE) CHANNEL
If available, a project playlist within the channel of the project's communication lead partner should be used, rather than creating a project channel for video publication. All the channel's existing followers will get the chance to see the video, and viewers of videos from other projects within the channel will also get the chance to see yours, without your project needing to build up its own following.

ESCI embedded the video in the project website homepage and Resources page, promoted it via LinkedIn and X, and further boosted visibility by advertising via Google ads and YouTube as in-feed and in-stream ads, running for 2 weeks after initial release. The video was also featured on the homepage of online magazine Auto Recycling World.

During the project final event in Brussels on 21 March 2024, the video was played to participants during the SALEMA 'project journey' session and on public display at the entrance to the venue, AutoWorld museum.

- **On YouTube, within two weeks of publication, the video had gained 4.8K views.**

According to data at project end on 30 April 2024, across all the platforms where the video was posted and figures were available, it had generated a **total of 6176 views**.

The video can be used by the SALEMA consortium well beyond the end of the project, continuing to support the adoption and impact of the solutions as part of a longer-term project legacy.

More details about the final video and its production are described in deliverable report *D9.5 'Final Video'*.

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ADVANTAGES OF VIDEOS

- Incorporate audio and visual elements that appeal to multiple senses;
- Provide a perfect opportunity for storytelling, engaging viewers in project activities and messages in a more human way;
- Give visibility to participating partners or case studies and their inputs into the project;
- Allow you to actually show concrete project results and explain them in a way that is easily understood;
- Are captivating, keeping viewers for longer on web pages where they are embedded and can help improve search engine optimisation (SEO);
- Offer an easy way to localise content for audiences in different target countries by translating the (.srt) subtitles file to upload with the video. (Always check the text and the new timings with a native speaker!)

3.3. Success Story 3: Final event

MAIN C&D 'WINS' – SALEMA FINAL EVENT

- 30 social media posts highlighting agenda, topics, speakers and exhibition;
- ±100 registrations achieved;
- Workflow synergies: demos exhibition, infographic, factsheet, Web content & social media;
- Final video - extra viewers & an engaging start to the project session;
- Good engagement, enthusiastic audience;
- Opportunity to gather new materials: photos, session videos & slides, interviews;
- Interviews with 3 external commentators act as testimonials;
- Online publication of slides, videos & other materials supports longer-term impact of event & project.

The SALEMA final event on 21 March 2024 was held in AutoWorld museum in Brussels – a fitting venue for automotive sector stakeholders to join project participants and invited guests to discuss the ongoing evolution of materials, policies and activities for more sustainable future mobility.

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The event organisers (EAA) and C&D support (ESCI) worked closely throughout the event preparations, defining event objectives, an overall plan and related communications actions, assigning responsibilities and deadlines and meeting regularly to update and move the action forward. Agreeing that the event itself should be seen as part of, and an exercise in, the project's overall storytelling approach, the C&D lead provided inputs to the day's agenda—in particular the SALEMA session—as well as implementing the communication plan.

Project branding was applied to the event 'logistical materials' such as a pdf of the agenda, the participant badges, panellist 'table tents' and was adapted to create content for an online event platform, created and managed by EAA.

Figure 4: SALEMA final event platform and session header banners

The event platform held all the session descriptions, other event details and also housed the registration tool. ESCI collaborated with EAA on the event texts, which synergised with the creation of other content such as speaker invitations, session moderators' guidelines, emails for SALEMA partners to disseminate among their own networks, and for 'Save the date' and registration's open 'Join us!' announcements on the project website, social media channels and partner networks. The first announcement was issued on 20 December 2023 and registration was opened on 22 January 2024.

TIP: START EARLY!
Venues and people's calendars fill up fast. Start planning months in advance, book the venue early and tell people to 'Save the date' before major holiday periods get in the way.

ESCI also provided the 'Save the date' and 'Join us!' announcement graphics to partners and speakers to disseminate, as well as making them available for download via the online news articles in case readers may also wish to deploy them.

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Figure 5: The SALEMA final event 'Save the date' and 'Join us!' announcement graphics

Templates were created in ESCI's account on Canva, the online design tool, so that the SALEMA C&D leader could rapidly create 'families' of graphics to promote the overall agenda and details of specific sessions, discussion topics, speakers, panellists and moderators, as well as the exhibition of the project's demonstration car parts that were manufactured with the project's new alloys. In total, 30 social media posts containing original graphics were published to promote the event.

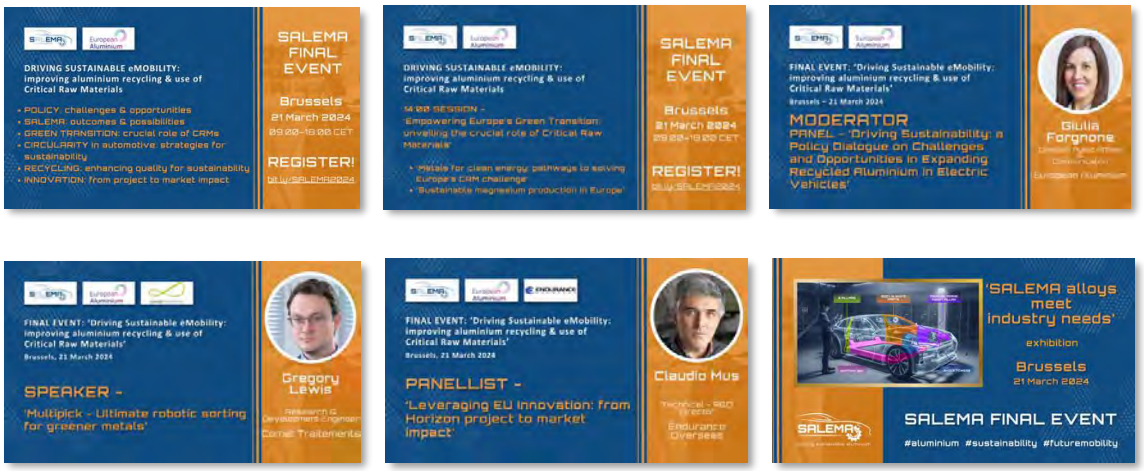

Figure 6: – Examples of pre-event social media graphics highlighting the overall agenda, session details, session moderators, session speakers, panellists and the demo exhibition

The moderator and speaker photos and social media graphics were also adapted for use in an over-arching slide-set, which was used to introduce the sessions, announce refreshment breaks and so on, helping to keep on track with the agenda timings during transition moments, and providing a relevant, consistent and attractive visual backdrop for the stage and the event videos and photos.

To support the exhibition of the project's demonstrator car parts, EAA organised display tables where visitors could view the parts alongside A5 stand-up display information created by ESCI.

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Figure 7: SALEMA demo exhibition display materials

These display documents were created in synergy with a fuller-length factsheet about the demos, which tied in and gave a new lease of life to an infographic created much earlier in the project. The double-sided A4 factsheet was printed in high quality and given to every event participant along with the project brochure and a copy of the final agenda. The factsheet doubled as a fuller-length exhibition guide, included a 5-in-1 QR code linking to various project webpages and YouTube playlist, and could also be kept by participants as an information source and reminder after the project ended. A Web-friendly and print-quality version were also made available to download from the project Resources page, along with the related icons.

Figure 8: SALEMA demos factsheet / final event exhibition guide, including demos infographic, descriptions, partner contacts and icons, with full icons set displayed below

The exhibition was open and available the whole day within the refreshments area, but to ensure participants were aware of it and let them know which partners to approach with any queries during the lunch break, the relevant partners (from Endurance, Fagor Ederlan, Gestamp, ASAS and CRF) were introduced on stage towards the end of the 'SALEMA project journey' session, where a background slide also displayed photos of the 5 demo parts.

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Figure 9: SALEMA partners with demos slide on stage, image as posted on social media, and a photo of engaged exhibition viewers during the final event on 21 March 2024

During the event, EAA and ESCI took photos and coordinated on live social media posting, with a total of 6 posts highlighting topics of the day. The event sessions were also video recorded and the videos were published online (on YouTube, embedded into the project Resources page) along with the presentations for long-term access by the project partners, target audiences and any other viewers who may find them useful. One presenter asked for part of their time not to be recorded and shared, because of potential content sensitivities.

TIP: CHECK PRIVACY CONCERNS IN ADVANCE!

Event registration tools, procedures and any use of people's personal data and images must be done in accordance with the European Union's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). The registration form should provide information and links to the privacy policy of the organisation that will be holding and handling the data. Participants should be informed during registration that they may be photographed or filmed during the event and how they can opt out.

It is also always good to inform speakers in advance if they will be filmed or their slides will be published online, in case they want to remove or restrict access to sensitive content.

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Figure 10: Thumbnail images for SALEMA final event session videos published on ESCI's 'Science Talks Extended' channel and findable in the main ESCI channel SALEMA playlist

TIP: SEE YOUR EVENT AS A STORYTELLING EXERCISE

Define event objectives and support these and your key messages by structuring the event as a participant experience, taking them through the project story and its wider context in a logical flow of topics in an engaging way. Make this approach explicit to all your project colleagues so they understand and support the approach.

Encourage all project representatives to avoid 'Death by PowerPoint' and use short engaging videos and attractive project visuals and a general storytelling approach.

Make all speakers aware of the range of sectors / levels of expertise among the audience members so they can be inclusive regarding their use of terminology and level of detail.

The session videos and their transcripts potentially provide a source that could be mined for further content. Making use of the availability of the video crew at the event, EAA and ESCI also collaborated on selecting questions and interviewees from among the event's non-project-participant attendees. Short interviews were recorded within the museum with: Benedetta Nucci (European Aluminium), Prof. Geoff Scamans (Innoval Technology & Brunel University) and Martin Tauber (International Magnesium Association & Critical Raw Materials Alliance). These were published on ESCI's 'Science Talks Extended' YouTube channel and the project website Resources and Interviews pages, providing interesting outside perspectives on achievements and their wider context and significance.

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Figure 11: Thumbnail images for quickfire video interviews recorded at the SALEMA final event

A media invitation was issued to around 10 contacts based in Brussels, for whom the topics were deemed potentially of interest. However, no members of the press attended, perhaps because of the timing, a lack of interest, or—in at least one case—because the journalist concerned had only recently written about the project.

Gathering feedback is good practice, especially in the earlier days of a project when lessons learned can be used in subsequent events. It should be clear whether survey questions or sections are asking about the event content or about experiences of e.g. the food. One useful question to ask could be something like: "For you, what was the most interesting/useful topic/discussion point, and why?". SALEMA did not survey final event participants, but informally reviewed lessons learned.

SIGNIFICANT PROJECT EVENTS ALLOW YOU TO:

- Communicate key messages before, during and after;
- Synergistically (cost and time-efficiently) combine the preparation and dissemination of multiple, inter-related C&D tools and messages for more effective reach, engagement & impact;
- Create event branding that builds on / adapts the project's visual identity, providing a related-but-separate event identity that can aid promotion;
- Display physical examples or evidence of results, e.g. posters or an exhibition;
- Display / disseminate project videos and printed materials to new / wider audiences or with a different message context;
- Invite & engage directly with stakeholders from specific / all of your target groups;
- Promote cross-fertilisation of ideas and knowledge, and increase opportunities for further collaboration;
- Communicate all your key results and messages to one physical audience, with something for everyone and bringing them along in your story.

More details about the final event and other events organised and attended by SALEMA are reported in detail in deliverable *D9.7 'Report on the scientific and technological dissemination'*.

3.4. Success story 3: Online presence

The SALEMA website and social media channels form the project's online presence. They were set up when the project started, as described in deliverable report D9.2 'Project website and social media channels'.

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Own content is crucial for the website and social media accounts. Publishing journalistic articles or videos always sparks interest in a project – resulting in more website visitors and a growing community on social media.

The website, in particular, can act as a vehicle for SALEMA communication and impact long after the project ends.

3.4.1. Social media

From its kick-off, the project used two social media channels: Twitter (later 'X') and LinkedIn. X was mainly for reaching out to journalists, academia, sister projects and the general public. LinkedIn aimed more at business and industry stakeholders.

After the take-over of Twitter by Elon Musk in 2022, there was a noticeable decline in the potential reach of the project's account on that platform. To offset this, we achieved higher growth and interaction on LinkedIn.

The success of project social media posts and channels is greatly dependent on the support of the consortium members. Their interactions offer the opportunity to reach out to their contact networks. It's therefore an important task is to consistently encourage partners who have personal or organisational accounts to ask their relevant colleagues or interact themselves with the project posts. This can be done by tagging them in the post. However, it can be a good idea to also notify them, e.g. via email, about the publication of a post or the timing of one that has been scheduled in advance. Otherwise, posts that are ignored too long by the tagged account can rapidly disappear from circulation.

TIP: TAG THE MOST ACTIVE / FOLLOWED ACCOUNTS
If you must choose between accounts you could tag, e.g. because space is limited, check which one has the largest number of followers, most often interacts with your project or posts, or is most influential in the area that your topic covers.

3.4.1.1. Campaigns

Social media campaigns are a good way to share content and gain new followers when, for example, there aren't yet any project results to show. In the early days of SALEMA, ESCI introduced members of the project consortium in a 'Faces' campaign. Social media cards featuring a photo, the consortium member's name, position/title and a quote, were made and posted. This is not only starts to build up visibility of the project and its partners to external audiences, it also catches the attention of the consortium members themselves and their networks, helping to win them as new followers.

A similar effect can be reached by introducing a series of partner institutions/companies or project case studies. Later in the project, a series of posts themed around key technologies / outcomes / demonstrators would support efforts to promote the project's exploitable results.

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3.4.1.2. Hashtags

Hashtags based on your project name could be unique and help your content to be found. This was not the case with #SALEMA, as this is also the name of a beachside village in Portugal, and so attracts a lot of content that is irrelevant to the project.

Hashtags should be clear, short, relevant and strategic, meaning that they should also be used by target audiences. They tell the algorithm what your post is about, and using relevant hashtags helps drive traffic to your content, potentially boosting views, likes, and shares.

TIP: CHECK WHICH HASHTAGS HAVE THE MOST LINKEDIN FOLLOWERS

Trying to choose between #sustainable and #sustainability?

Paste https://www.linkedin.com/feed/hashtag/ into your website browser and add the term after the final/.
When you click enter, at the top of the page, LinkedIn will show how many people on the platform are following that hashtag.

The main hashtags used for SALEMA and their number of LinkedIn followers (as well as similar terms) are ranked as follows:

- **#innovation - 38,361,887**, (#innovative - 9,927)
- **#sustainability - 13,148,170**, (#sustainable - 57,373)
- **#electricvehicles - 401,577**, (#ev - 25,539 / #evs - 6,962)
- **#manufacturing - 283,745**, (#industry - 17,693)
- **#circulareconomy - 79,850**, (#circularity - 3,180)
- **#recycling - 55,640**, (#recycle - 7,793)
- **#automotive - 240,664**
- **#crm - 19,042**, (#criticalrawmaterials - 280)
- **#EU - 12,011**
- **#aluminium - 9,189**, (#aluminum - 5,886)
- **#extrusion - 6,348**
- **#H2020 - 3,899**
- **#scrap - 2,544**

Other terms that could be used as hashtags for certain SALEMA messages have much smaller numbers of followers: #stamping - 1,305, #lifecycleassessment – 981, #alloys – 535 (#aluminiumalloys – 22), #HPDC – 318.

It is also interesting to note that, at project end, certain relevant terms that are probably much newer have started to gather a small following: #LIBS 137, #aluminiumscrap – 90, #alloydesign – 15, even #laserinducedbreakdownspectroscopy – 4!

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TIP: KEEP THE NUMBER OF HASHTAGS LOW
E.g. 2 for a tweet and 6 in a LinkedIn post. This allows your posts to be more focused, prevents rejection by the algorithms, and helps you connect with a larger audience.

When SALEMA ended in April 2024, the social media channels had gathered more than 620 followers, 110 on X and 517 on LinkedIn. With around 340 posts published across the channels, X posts had clocked up more than 23,300 impressions, with a 2.1% engagement rate. As expected, LinekdIn users gave a better response: aeound 90,650 impressions and 3.1% engagement. In total, audiences across these channels made almost 8,300 interactions with the project content.

3.4.2. Website

The objective of the SALEMA website—https://salemaproject.eu/—is to ensure an entry point to the project work and story. It presents achievements relevant for scientific and industrial communities and other stakeholder categories (including end users and the public). It contains all the institutional information about the SALEMA. In addition, the website offers a channel for sharing the project's results, potentially involving stakeholders and expanding their community.

Navigation within the website is easy and straightforward, with pages accessible from the homepage and subpages within the pages. The website has a homepage and four main sections. In the final months of the project, the content / navigation structure was updated as follows:

- **PROJECT**
  - **About** – *simple content update*
  - **Results** – *new section using agreed content from 3 factsheets & infographics*
    - **Alloy design** – *including relevant partner contacts, section anchor & new navigation button*
    - **Improved recycling** – *including relevant partner contacts, section anchor & new navigation button*
    - **Demonstrators** – *including relevant partner contacts, section anchor & new navigation button*
  - **Circular economy** – *simple content update*
  - **Benefits** – *simple content update plus new section anchor & navigation button*
  - **Partners**
  - **News** – *new stories added*
  - **Interviews** – *new section and content added*
- **SOLUTIONS**
  - **Key technologies**– *simple content updates*
    - **High-Pressure Die Casting**
    - **Stamping**
    - **Extrusion**
  - **Demonstrators**– *simple content updates*
    - **Shock Tower** –*new section anchor &navigation button*
    - **Frontal Frame**–*new section anchor &navigation button*

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        - **Body in White**–*new section anchor &navigation button*
        - **B-Pillar**–*new section anchor &navigation button*
        - **Battery Box**–*new section anchor &navigation button*
- **RESOURCES** – *page content display updated to show thumbnail images, short descriptions, viewing / download links to web-friendly & print-quality versions where relevant, plus new section anchors linked from new top-of-page breadcrumbs*
    - **Brochure**–*new section anchor &navigation button*
    - **Infographics**–*new section anchor &navigation button*
    - **Factsheets**–*new section anchor &navigation button*
    - **Videos**–*new section anchor &navigation button*
    - **Journalistic articles**–*new section anchor &navigation button*
    - **Deliverable reports**–*new section anchor &navigation button*
    - **Presentations**–*new section anchor &navigation button*
- **CONTACT**

(Two of the communication tools that can be found on the Resources web page are also described in deliverable reports there: the SALEMA introductory video in *D9.4* and the SALEMA brochure in *D9.3*.)

Crosslinking to and from other websites (e.g. of consortium partners) helps search engines to understand a website. But also interlinking from one page to another keeps visitors on the same website for longer. Checking through the website from time to time to add or update relevant crosslinks is a good idea – especially as activities mature and results begin to materialise.

Mentioning the website in all communication tools is also definitely a must: journalistic articles, press releases, social media posts or the closing frame of a project video are all good places to include the URL. On print material this can be done with a QR code, linking either to a single project webpage, or to a specially created page where 5 links can be found – greatly expanding the power of the tool.

Figure 12: 5-in-1 QR code from a SALEMA factsheet and the specially-created webpage it links to

Altogether during the lifetime of the project there were more than 11250 visits to the website and 1475 downloads. In project month 1, the circularity infographic (13%) and the project brochure (4%)

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were the most frequently downloaded. However, the materials that were added towards the end of the project soon saw a lot of interest, with the full set of infographics scoring 24%, the Deliverable Reports 12%, the final event presentation slides 5%, and the new factsheets 3%. This underscores the value in making such materials available, doing it in an attractive way, and promoting their availability on other channels, so fulfilling the 'shop window' role of the platform.

To gather these numbers the analysis tool Matomo was used. It is an open-source analytical platform with advanced features. Additionally, it leaves data ownership to the website owner, and protects both owner and visitor privacy. Moreover, Matomo's reports are also more accurate than those provided by other tools (e.g. Google Analytics).

WEBSITE UPDATING AS PROJECT NEARS END ALLOWS YOU TO:

- Turn it into an effective 'shop window' where target audiences can quickly and easily find what's most useful to them;
- Ensure all final project results and benefits are clearly communicated and up to date;
- Ensure that partner contacts are given in context so website visitors can follow up with the relevant owners of exploitable results;
- Ensure all project materials, reports, communication tools etc. are publicly findable for downloading or as a resource for onward dissemination and longer-term impact;
- Increase the chances that your project leaves a more lasting legacy.

4. Conclusions: Key take-aways

By applying communication and dissemination best practices, the SALEMA team of ESCI and EAA succeeded in raising the project visibility, attracting and informing target audiences in online and offline interactions, and paving the way for exploitation of the final results.

Through the descriptive sections and examples success stories above, the authors have highlighted a number of tips, recommendations, insights and lessons learned that could provide guidance or ideas for communication and dissemination partners in other EU-funded projects.

In conclusion, the main take-away messages of this report are as follows:

- **A website is the entry point of a project.** Here all information can be stored and found. To raise awareness about the website, crosslinking webpages and from social media and other content is crucial. Regularly uploading own-created content keeps the pages active and

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attractive. Taking time to make final updates that leave the website as an effective 'shop window' is a worthwhile way to extend the potential impact and legacy of the project.

- **LinkedIn seems to have become a more reliable social media platform than X.** Since a change to the core design and algorithm after Elon Musk took over Twitter, there has been a noticeable decline in the potential reach of accounts for projects like SALEMA.
- **Well-chosen hashtags help to drive traffic** to the created content. This boosts the number of views, likes, and shares.
- **Smart campaigns help to raise awareness and gain new followers**, even when there are no projects results to communicate about.
- **Clustering with sister projects boosts communication**. Cross-posting content and supporting each other's posts on social media is an easy win and holding joint events opens new doors for project promotion.
- **Professional videos are effective for presenting project results.** The audio and visual elements help explain how the results works and what it means for partners and stakeholder sectors. Experts can share their experiences in interviews and add a human dimension. A storytelling approach helps to hook viewers and keep them engaged. This is a nice way to promote the project even after it ends and so to further support the exploitation of results.
- **For video publishing, use an established YouTube channel** that is already growing its followers organically. If available, this could best be the channel of the project's lead communication partner.

4.1. Next steps

As the SALEMA project is now at end, no further communication and dissemination activities are planned, beyond lightweight maintenance of the project website and social media channels. However, with the successful update of the website as a 'shop window' for all the materials created and the messages they contain about the project activities, partners, results and benefits, it is anticipated that interest and impact may continue, as a longer-term legacy of the project.

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