



**Grant Agreement N°857191**

# **Distributed Digital Twins for industrial SMEs: a big-data platform**

## **DELIVERABLE 8.4 – COMMUNICATION PLAN AND REPORT (I)**



# Document Identification

Project	IoTwinS
Project Full Title	Distributed Digital Twins for industrial SMEs: a big-data platform
Project Number	857191
Starting Date	September 1st, 2019
Duration	3 years
H2020 Programme	H2020-EU.2.1.1. - INDUSTRIAL LEADERSHIP - Leadership in enabling and industrial technologies - Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)
Topic	ICT-11-2018-2019 - HPC and Big Data enabled Large-scale Test-beds and Applications
Call for proposal	H2020-ICT-2018-3
Type of Action	IA-Innovation Action
Website	iotwins.eu
Work Package	WP8
WP Leader	ART-ER
Responsible Partner(s)	ART-ER
File Name	D8.4 -Communication plan and report (I)
Contractual delivery date	29/2/2020
Actual delivery date	29/2/2020
Version	1
Status	Final
Dissemination level	Public
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# 1 Introduction

Communication is at the core of every project. It crosses with all project activities along its entire lifetime. Communication exists before the project starts, while it is active and running and after the project ends. This is the reason why it is something everyone should take care of since the very beginning.

When talking about European projects, communication is aimed at making a large audience understand the added value of innovation and its impact on everyday life, the importance of the EU support to research and innovation in facing societal challenges.

Communication and dissemination activities often overlap, so that it is not always easy to separate the two levels, to trace a well-defined border between the two of them. They interact with each other, and the one feeds the other.

The IoTwinS communication plan aims at providing all partners with the proper tools, channels and actions to reach out to society and show impact of EU funded projects.

## 2 Communication objectives

IoTwinS Communication Plan is conceived to provide due relevance to single actions and create pathways towards different target groups all along the project life.

It uses diverse communication tools that serve the specific goals, key messages and target groups.

The goal is therefore to elaborate an exhaustive Plan to successfully implement the IoTwinS communication strategy and provide Partners with a supportive document for concrete communication actions towards projects stakeholders and beneficiaries.

Given its flexible and adaptable nature, the communication plan is conceived as a living document, subject to revisions and adjustment during the entire duration of the project.

The primary goal of the communication strategy is to influence the knowledge, attitude and behaviour of the defined target groups toward IoTwinS project and its activities. To reach this overall objective, the activities implemented within the strategy will aim to:

- **raise awareness** about the project and its activities;
- **inform** the audience about the outcomes and results of the project;
- **engage** with partners and stakeholders to (continue to) collaborate with one another and to contribute to the project's goals and activities;
- **elaborate and produce** material for an effective communication strategy;
- **produce** specific tools for a better communication interaction among partner;

showing how

- European collaboration has achieved more than would have otherwise been possible, notably in achieving scientific excellence, contributing to competitiveness and solving societal challenges;
- the outcomes are relevant to our everyday lives, by creating jobs, introducing novel technologies, or making our lives more comfortable in other ways;
- making better use of the results, by making sure they are taken up by decision-makers to influence policy-making and by industry and the scientific community to ensure follow-up.

As a general rule, the **tone of voice** of all communication actions and materials will be **professional and divulgative, reliable and explicative**.

In order to assess the impact of all communication actions, the next plan update will also include a set of **KPIs** so as to report on performed activities.

## 3 Target groups

To reach projects communication goals, **internal and external target groups** will be addressed in order to combine direct project communication actions, channels and tools with single partners' assets, so as to multiply the final impact and also capitalize on single partners' local contact networks and ecosystems.

### 3.1 Project partners

In order to attain projects aims, a smooth and effective internal communication should be encouraged for a quick and easy circulation of information.

**Project partners are the first communication target:** it is very important to engage them since the very beginning around communication issues, as communication runs in synergy with all project steps. It is important to spread the projects progress not only to the project staff, but to the entire organization.

To facilitate the exchange of project related documents, a common platform has been setup, EMDESK, and it has been described in the **Deliverable 8.2**.

Partners can find relevant documentation there and use it as a common working space.

Internal communication should also consist of e-mails, phone calls, conference calls, regular Steering Group meetings.

Each partner has appointed a communication officer who will be the contact point for the project Outreach Team. Details concerning the OT members are included in the **Deliverable 8.1**.

### 3.2 Wider innovation community

A wider innovation community will be addressed to inform and raise awareness of the project locally and at EU level. It will help create further opportunities for the benefit of local stakeholders. Wider innovation community consists of:

- Policy makers
- Local, regional development agencies
- Entrepreneurial associations
- SMEs, micro and large companies, startups
- Innovation centres
- Scientific community
- European Commission
- Regional Brussels Offices
- European networks
- European initiatives, such as S3 Platforms (Industrial Modernisation Platform), Vanguard Initiative
- General public

Direct, lean, useful and attractive information about the project will be shared to the wider innovation community to raise awareness of the project and its contribution to the development of innovation environment in partner areas and EU.

The actual list of the wider innovation community will be developed in the next months and inserted in the first update of the communication plan.

## 4 Communication channels and tools

### 4.1 Internal communication channels and tools

For mutual communication between partners, various communication channels will be used. The everyday communication will be carried out by using e-mails, phone calls and bilateral, multilateral conference calls, and a common platform for documents sharing, EMDESK, has been activated, as described in the previous chapter.

Moreover, each partner has appointed a communication officer who will be the contact point for the project Outreach Team, as described in the **Deliverable 8.1**. In addition, a set of tools have been developed to help information circulate with ease among partners.

#### **FORM FOR COLLECTING ALL PARTNERS' COMMUNICATION TOOLS ([LINK](#))**

Being partners themselves, along with the networks and initiatives in which they are involved, the first project's communication channel, IoTwinS project will try to capitalize upon what is already available. This form will help in mapping all available channels so as to realize what actually is the project communication potential.

#### **NEWS AND EVENT FORM ([LINK](#))**

It has been developed to give partners the possibility to ask for the publication of a news or event on the website. Using the form is also a way for informing WP8 Leader about project activities progresses and to plan actions in a more effective way. Moreover, based on the inputs received via the form, a shared Events calendar will be built and made available, using a built-in function of the EMDESK tool, the tool that the IoTwinS Coordination Team selected for the management of the project and the common shared file repository.

Partners can inform with each other about upcoming events of interest: this will allow for being constantly updated concerning the most important initiatives for dissemination purposes, and at the same time it represent a strategic planning tool. It will be implemented as the project goes on: partners will indicate an event as worth to be added to the Calendar when filling in the "News and events online form", presented before.

#### **NEWS AND EVENTS GUIDELINES FOR IOTWINS PARTNERS**

A **news** is something that is worth to be told, something that will be of interest of IoTwinS audience. In the IoTwinS context a news is a project achievement, an important acknowledgement, the winning of a particular award in the field of interest of the project.

IoTwinS partners will follow the some tips when preparing a piece of news:

- To be brief: time is precious, it's important to be able to capture the audience attention with a catchy title;
- To go straight to the point: summarizing in 2/3 bullet points the news;
- To avoid jargon and acronyms: in European projects often there is an abuse of acronyms, which are not suited for media;

- To customize the news: stressing the impact of the news, as people are interested in what is going to affect their life somehow.

Concerning **events**, all IoTwinS partners will follow events guidelines which are extensively described in section 4.2.2 Events.

### **SHARED IOTWINS CALENDAR**

In order to allow partners to have a full visibility on what is going on in the project and which public events are organized or participated by one or more partners a shared Events calendar will be made available, using a built-in function of the EMDESK tool, the tool that the IoTwinS Coordination selected for the management of the project and the common shared file repository.

Partners can inform each other about upcoming events of interest: this will allow constantly updated concerning the most important initiatives for dissemination purposes, and at the same time it represents a strategic planning tool. It will be implemented as the project goes on: partners will indicate an event as worth to be added to the Calendar when filling in the “News and events online form”, presented before.

## **4.2 External communication**

### **4.2.1 Brand, Visual and Verbal Identity**

IoTwinS project visual identity will consist of a logo and a studied pay off; a series of monograms to identify the main projects testbeds' themes: facility management, manufacturing and replicability; a set of fonts and colours; a set of iconography, along with indications on the projects' tone of voice and finally, example of applications on materials and socials.

A digital brandbook will be shared with the partners' as a communication guideline, it is also included in the Deliverable 8.5 and downloadable from the [following link](#).

#### **4.2.1.1 Digital**

IoTwinS digital strategy will be implemented during the projects lifetime, using different tools.

### **PROJECT WEBSITE**

A project website has been created with the following URL: [www.iotwins.eu](http://www.iotwins.eu)

It has been framed to provide as visibility as possible to project benefits and results and includes the following sections:

- **Homepage**, with an immediate overview of the main website contents
- **The project**, a page dedicated to describe the project and its main goals, plus a download area dedicated to project deliverables
- **Partners**, with a brief description of all partners and their contacts
- **News and Events**, to be constantly updated about last project's activities and achievements
- **Media**, a section organized into 3 parts: Press Kit, Photos and Publications, that will include photos from events and other initiatives.
- **Glossary**, a page including the definition for all technical term faced in IoTwinS project website
- **Reserved Area**, a link to the EMDESK platform



A complete description of the website sections is included in **Deliverable 8.5: Communication Tools (I)**.

The website will be regularly updated, also with direct contributions by the partners. It is built with the aim of informing the general public on the project's activities and its topics, having in mind potential end users of the services that will be developed at the end of the project.

Partners will have the possibility to contribute to the News and Events section of the web site by using the online dedicated form, presented in section 4.1 Internal communication channels and tools.

ART-ER will take care of the publication of news and events on the website.

## **SOCIAL MEDIA**

Social media will be used to inform, involve and engage, to raise awareness and communicate about project's activities locally and at EU level.

IoTwinS project has a **Twitter profile - @iotwinS\_EU** – that will be managed by ART-ER as main administrator, with inputs from all partners, to:

- give evidence of new contents that are published on the website: news about achievements, publications, promotion of events
- tell in realtime about important events (livetweeting).

Basically, it will work according to a **social management plan**, that will be shared in the framework of the Outreach team. Easily understandable language with visuals to inform stakeholders and general public about project activities and results will be adopted.

As a general rule, social networks should be used to drive traffic to the project website, to help building a strong brand and create and engage a community of followers.

Information in social network will only be in **English**. Partners can publish posts by adding a comment in their own language, according to the kind of audience they want to reach.

All partners will be invited to inform ART-ER about the existence of their organization social network accounts so that there can be interaction with reference to the project topics.

This mapping will be done through the online form described in the section 4. 1 Internal communication channels and tools.

The project Twitter account will follow all most important pages that are relevant with respect to the project topics, i.e. Research Institutes, Universities, Companies, Magazines, experts, other important EU funded projects in the field of AI, Machine Learning, Big Data, and interaction with these influential actors will be pursued. Partners' official accounts will also be followed, so as to maximize efforts, as already mentioned.

Relevant hashtags will be used, or created, according to specific needs.

All partners are responsible for promoting the project profile and sharing its contents with relevant stakeholders in their territory.

Advertising campaigns (Twitter Ads) will also be activated whenever is deemed necessary. To promote important initiatives organized in the framework of the IoTwinS projects, such as upcoming events or achievements.

The Report on communication activities will also include statistics from the Twitter account. They will take into account:

- the number of followers
- the number of impressions
- the number of interactions (retweets, likes, mentions).

## **PROJECT VIDEOS**

A series of videos will be produced during the project. They will be extensively described in the Deliverable 8.6.

### **4.2.1.2 Press office and Media relations**

The mass media is one of the main communication channel to reach the general public on local and national level. Communication materials, mainly press releases, should be sent not only to common media, but also to specialized business, innovation and research themes magazines. European channels are also available for this kind of activity, namely [Horizon, the Research and Innovation Magazine](#), just to mention one.

It is important to inform media about the newsworthy events and results. Special attention should be directed towards raising media awareness of the project activities and results, engaging their interest in the subject. Press releases will also be published on the project website and promoted through project social media accounts. Press releases should always include a link to the project website.

During the project, all partners' press offices will be involved in this activity, in order to assure a good coverage at local, national and European level.

## **4.2.2 Events**

To reach IoTwinS communication objectives, special events will be organised throughout the project. For improvement of internal communication, a project kick-off meeting, technical meetings and steering group meetings will be organised.

The term “event” refers to private or public events, scientific conferences and congresses, meetings, technical workshops, open days, political level events, events organized by the European Commission or its Directorates, trade fairs and exhibitions.

Events offer the possibility to meet in person with the audience: this allows for a more proper presentation and explanation of project results, and to go more in-depth on details. They represent a great networking opportunity.

When talking about events, it should always be considered that their lifetime also include an amount of time before and one after.

Before an event, whether a technical workshop or a scientific conference, a promotion activity should be started: partners should work on selecting the proper audience, the message to be conveyed, the timing for sending invitations, and all other activities needed for the specific case, according with WP8 coordinator and Outreach team.

After the event, some follow-up actions should be undertaken, so as to keep the audience attention alive and to schedule any further contacts or meeting with people who showed interest in the project's activities.

The events that will be organized in the framework of the project, including the Dissemination events that are fully described in the related Event chapter of the Deliverable 8.3, will be duly communicated to the larger public, in order to reach the goals described in the Objectives section of this document.

Integrated communication actions will be put in place: events will be extensively promoted via the website, the Twitter page and via mass mailing actions, where available. Press release will be prepared depending on the importance and the impact of the initiatives.

## **EVENTS GUIDELINES**

Events can be:

- organized at **Consortium level**
- organized by **single partners**
- organized by **third parties**.

There can be different levels of participation:

- as a **speaker**:
  - in the event agenda, the person participating should indicate *Name and Surname, IoTwinS project partner*
  - a standard presentation of IoTwinS project is foreseen, using the official project template
  - if possible, ask event organizers to add project logo on event's related promotional materials, including website
  - if possible, bring a project rollup or a poster
  - bring some copies of the project's leaflet or a USB key that contains the leaflet in digital format plus other informative documents
  - take some pictures or brief videos during the presentation, where the project logo is visible
  - publish some posts on social media, always mentioning @IoTwinS\_EU and tagging project partners or relevant actors
  - write a news right during and/or after the event and use the online form to share it with project partners.
- as an **auditor**:
  - Partners attending the event should take some pictures and publish some posts on social media, always mentioning @IoTwinS\_EU and tagging project partners or relevant actors

Partners could also decide not to take part to an event themselves, and opt for a light promotion activity of it, by publishing **a news on the website** and spreading it through **social media by using the ad hoc online form**. Also, partners could decide to add a particular event to the **project events calendar**. In any case, partners should always make sure that the right visibility is given to the project activities and to the EU funds. This is the reason why all communication materials have been conceived to clearly convey the project values and the related EU contribution, and partners are invited to always use them when communicating about the project.

## **IoTWINS PATRONAGE REQUESTS**

IoTwinS partners can be asked by third parties to grant free of charge patronage to an event or initiative. In such cases, the Governing Board has to be informed and takes decision on it. Partners can use an **ad hoc online form** to ask for permission.

Once a decision is taken, the concerned partner will share the IoTwinS logo with the event organizers.

This will be added to all communication and promotional materials with the label “Promoted by” or "In collaboration with".