



Leisure factsheet 7

Insight and marketing

**activity
alliance**

**disability
inclusion
sport**

Understanding your audience is essential. Strong insight helps your organisation provide truly welcoming and accessible offers.

It also supports effective communications to ensure you reach a diverse market - including disabled people and people with long-term health conditions.



What makes your insight and marketing inclusive?

2

Inclusive organisations use insight to drive their marketing and communication activities. They successfully embed the following key principles:



Engage and value the voice and expertise of disabled people and people with long-term health conditions.



Gather and use insight to inform wider strategy and business planning.



Prioritise and target key audiences by tapping into people's values and motivations.



Understand individual needs, barriers and preferences for services and communications.



Use accessible communication methods which consider all conditions and impairments.



Act on feedback and learning to deliver continuous improvements.



Consider your current customer insight and marketing approaches and ask yourself:

- What do you know about disabled people and people with long-term health conditions in your local community?
- Where are your knowledge gaps?
- How do you ensure your communications are inclusive, effective and reach your intended audiences?



Developing inclusive insight and marketing

3

There are many ways your organisation can gather and successfully apply customer insight and inclusive communications:

Be clear about your goal

There is a lot of information available to help you reach disabled people and people with long-term health conditions, so it is important to have a clear idea of what you want to find out. Good questions to start with are:

- Are you interested in local demographics and the size of the market?
- Do you want to know about current activity levels or barriers to participation?
- Or, are you looking for knowledge about disability organisations and their priorities and challenges?



Top tip: Activity Alliance's engagement **factsheet 1. Know your audience** and **factsheet 4. Gathering and using insight on disabled people** are useful places to start your insight journey.

[View all effective engagement factsheets on our website.](#)

Explore and grow your own data

To gain information specific to your organisation you may need to undertake your own research. Consider the data sources available to you. What does your customer management system tell you about disabled people and people with long-term health conditions who engage with your services? Evaluating previous programmes or learnings can support you to grow knowledge about your audiences. Also consider if you can access shared information from your other sites or services.

Using a range of methods for gathering customer feedback is vital to building your understanding.



Top tip: Draw out useful insight from mystery visits, comment cards, complaints processes, and communications like enquiry forms and social media. Surveys, interviews, and focus groups with disabled people and people with long-term health conditions will also be important to generate new knowledge.

Engage directly with disabled people

Co-producing your research with disabled people and people with long-term health conditions is essential. It's a good idea to use local networks and partnerships to develop trusted relationships with key organisations and individuals. Take time to consider different conditions and impairments and reach out to those you don't always hear from.

Be innovative in your approaches and find mutually beneficial ways to access advice. For example, can you offer free membership in return for feedback? This is a great way to find out what you are doing well and what areas need improvement. Don't forget to consider the entire customer journey from your marketing materials through to taking part in activities.



Top tip: It's best practice to continue to test your findings and ideas on an ongoing basis.



Use accessible research methods

Make sure your research is well planned and accessible to disabled people and people with long-term health conditions. It is good practice to ask about access or communication needs in advance and offer support to individuals to encourage them to take part.

Key things to think about are:

- Are the questions easy to understand?
- Have you thought about your research methods and are they inclusive? For example, if you use a telephone survey can you provide alternative formats to ensure individuals with hearing impairments can take part? If someone would struggle to attend an in-person event, could you consider virtual options?

Deliver inclusive and informed communications

Having gathered your insight - it now needs putting into practice! Review your organisation's marketing strategy to embed inclusion and encourage more disabled people and people with long-term conditions to be active. Find ways to push positive messaging and new delivery channels. Things to consider:

- Can you set accessibility standards through your brand guidelines?
- Do you need to support your own or outsourced workforces to develop new skills?
- How can you regularly showcase what makes your services inclusive?

Get disabled people involved in all your marketing and communications activity, from design to implementation. Apply any learning across your approaches, not just those specifically targeting disabled people and people with long-term health conditions. Activity Alliance has lots of resources to support you. Check out our [inclusive marketing and communications webpage](#) to get started.

Useful resources

Activity Alliance has a suite of resources and services that can support you with insight and marketing.

- Our **inclusive communications factsheets** are a good starting point.
- Another useful resource is our **effective engagement factsheet 5. Reaching more disabled people through accessible and inclusive communications.**
- Our **research and insight reports** lead the way on disabled people and people with long-term health conditions in sport and physical activity.



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This factsheet is part of our leisure resource.

View the full resource on our website:

activityalliance.org.uk/resources

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This document is available in Word format. Please contact us if you need support. Activity Alliance is the operating name for the English Federation of Disability Sport. Registered Charity no. 1075180.