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PROEXAG

NON-TRADITIONAL AGRICULTURAL EXPORT SUPPORT PROJECT

COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY FOR GUATEMALA

Assignment Number: ST/88-24

SUBMITTED TO:

Regional Office for Central America and Panama (ROCAP)  
U.S. Agency for International Development  
Guatemala City, Guatemala

SUBMITTED BY:

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through

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As part of a regional Central American program to support expansion of the private sector in the area of non-traditional exports, a brief communication activities analysis of the Guatemalan association of exporters of non-traditional exports was conducted. The analysis, Phase I of a possible three-phase effort--and subsequent communications development--are designed as key elements for establishing a model to facilitate review and strengthening of counterpart associations in other Central American nations.

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## PREFACE

Assignment ST/88-24, "Tech/Communications Strategy/Guatemala," is a three-phase initiative designed to assist and support the Gremial de Exportadores de Productos no Tradicionales (Gremial) to assess, analyze, and possibly strengthen its communication activities and, thereby, enhance linkages with its members and other audiences.

The assignment was developed by and conducted through the PROEXAG project contracted to Chemonics International by the U.S. Agency for International Development (AID) Regional Office of Central America and Panama (ROCAP). Phase I of the assignment was conducted during November 28-December 15, 1988. Activation of Phases II and III will be based on the outcome and evaluation of Phase I.

## A. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

A group of businesses in Guatemala formed the Gremial de Exportadores de Productos no Tradicionales (Guild of Exporters of Non-traditional Products) in 1982 as a vehicle for achieving expanded trade, stronger representation, and increased impact in lobbying for favorable legislation, all related to products other than the traditional Guatemalan exports of coffee, sugar, cotton, bananas, and beef.

In six years, the Gremial grew to more than 500 members broadly organized under five product groups, incorporating several commissions and sub-commissions concerned with specific products or product groups.

Similar counterpart organizations came into being in other Central American nations. To assist these organizations to more effectively conduct their activities,

in 1986 ROCAP developed the Non-traditional Agricultural Export Support program, or PROEXAG project, to provide private sector assistance to these organizations, specifically in the agricultural realm.

One of the project's broad priority areas revolves around assisting Central American groups, or federations, with organizational development. Communications-related topics stand among 10 discrete activities identified for project action. These not only include enhanced capacity to manage and disseminate industry information, but also strengthened capacity to respond to federation member information needs, and expanded access to external information sources.

In Guatemala, these bases served as the platform for the Gremial's request to PROEXAG for assistance in the development communications area based on Gremial management's desire that its existing communications effort might be strengthened in line with project priorities. PROEXAG responded with a proposal for a three-phase assessment and analysis of Gremial communications.

The Gremial's request--and the project's subsequent response--fall within the project's task order no. 5, "Federation Strengthening in the Development Communications Area," and represent an initial thrust that, depending on outcome, may have application to other Central American export federations.

## B. APPROACH

PROEXAG project leaders, jointly with key staff at the Gremial, formulated an approach to information gathering for Phase I that essentially sought to address three broad questions:

- a.) what sorts of information do Gremial members (and those who might be considering alliance with the organization) seek in support of successful exportation of non-traditional products;
- b.) what is the nature and scope of information that the Gremial is currently providing; and,
- c.) what communication methods are presently being utilized for information dissemination.

Activities conducted under Phase I of this approach included: attendance at AGRITRADE, the first International Agricultural Convention and Exposition in Guatemala, sponsored by Gremial; visitation at the Gremial to learn about and discuss communication activities, products, and

concerns with professional staff; meetings with a selected cross-section of Gremial members; meetings with ROCAF and USAID/Guatemala representatives, and extensive discussions with PROEXAG project staff.

C. FINDINGS

Inquiry results and an analysis of current Gremial communication activities have been prepared as a draft document, "Analysis of the Present Communications Strategy of the Gremial de Exportadores de Productos No-tradicionales," annexed to this report.

D. ANNEXES

Annex 1. Assessment and Analysis Report

(Available from PROEXAG)

Annex 2. Contacts Made in Support of Phase I

AT GREMIAL

Ricardo Santa Cruz: Gerente General  
Gustavo Chang: Jefe de Informacion Comercial  
Claudia Martinez: Editora de Informacion Comercial  
Jorge Mendez: Encargado de Proyectos

GREMIAL MEMBERS

Gloria Elena Polanco - Frutesa, S.A.  
Antonio Maldonado - Baby Fresh, S.A.  
Julio Hector Estrada - Intibuca, S.A.  
Rodrigo Springmuhl - Serpex  
Jose Carlos Pomes - (no enterprise name)

PROEXAG

John Lamb - Team Leader  
Bruce Brower - Computer Utilization and Market  
Information Specialist  
Ricardo Frohmader - Marketing Specialist  
John Guy Smith - Post-harvest Specialist

ROCAF

Rick Clark - Project Liaison Officer

USAID/GUATEMALA

Tully Cornick - Agricultural Development Officer

[Confidential Technical Report]

**ANALYSIS OF THE PRESENT COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY OF THE  
GREMIAL DE EXPORTADORES DE PRODUCTOS NO-TRADICIONALES**

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The following comments represent an effort to distill, organize, and present for review information developed through: a.) meetings and discussion with Gremial staff, Gremial members, and PROEXAG project personnel; b.) review of Gremial publications and information materials; and, c.) observation and analysis.

**I. THE GREMIAL: SCOPE, STRUCTURE, AND ORGANIZATION**

**A. Origin**

The Gremial (a guild--or association--of Guatemalan exporters of non-traditional products) was founded in 1982 as a non-profit institution to facilitate and enhance private sector exportation of other than traditional Guatemalan products. Key elements of the rationale for founding the Guild were to: a.) mobilize and bring to bear organized representation; and, b.) actively communicate with the private and public sectors on behalf of the non-traditional products export industry.

Development and maintenance of information functions and communication channels thus underpin and directly impact many of the Gremial's stated objectives and activities and thereby assume major importance for supporting the Guild's operations and its allocation of resources.

## B. Structure

While exporters of perishable and processed non-traditional agricultural products constitute a majority membership group-- more than 50%--the Gremial also includes exporters of other products such as textiles, cut flowers and plants, plus furniture and other wood products. The diversity of represented products and associated concerns led to creation of a hierarchy of industry- and product-specific commissions and sub-commissions (Table 1).

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**Table 1. GREMIAL COMPOSITION: PRODUCT GROUPS,  
COMMISSIONS, AND SUB-COMMISSIONS**

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### Product Groups

- \* Perishable fresh produce
- \* Processed/frozen food, drink
- \* Raw materials
- \* Non-food consumer items (cut flowers, plants)
- \* Furniture and other unspecified

### Commissions

- \* Agricultural products commission
- \* Clothing commission
- \* Furniture and other wood products commission

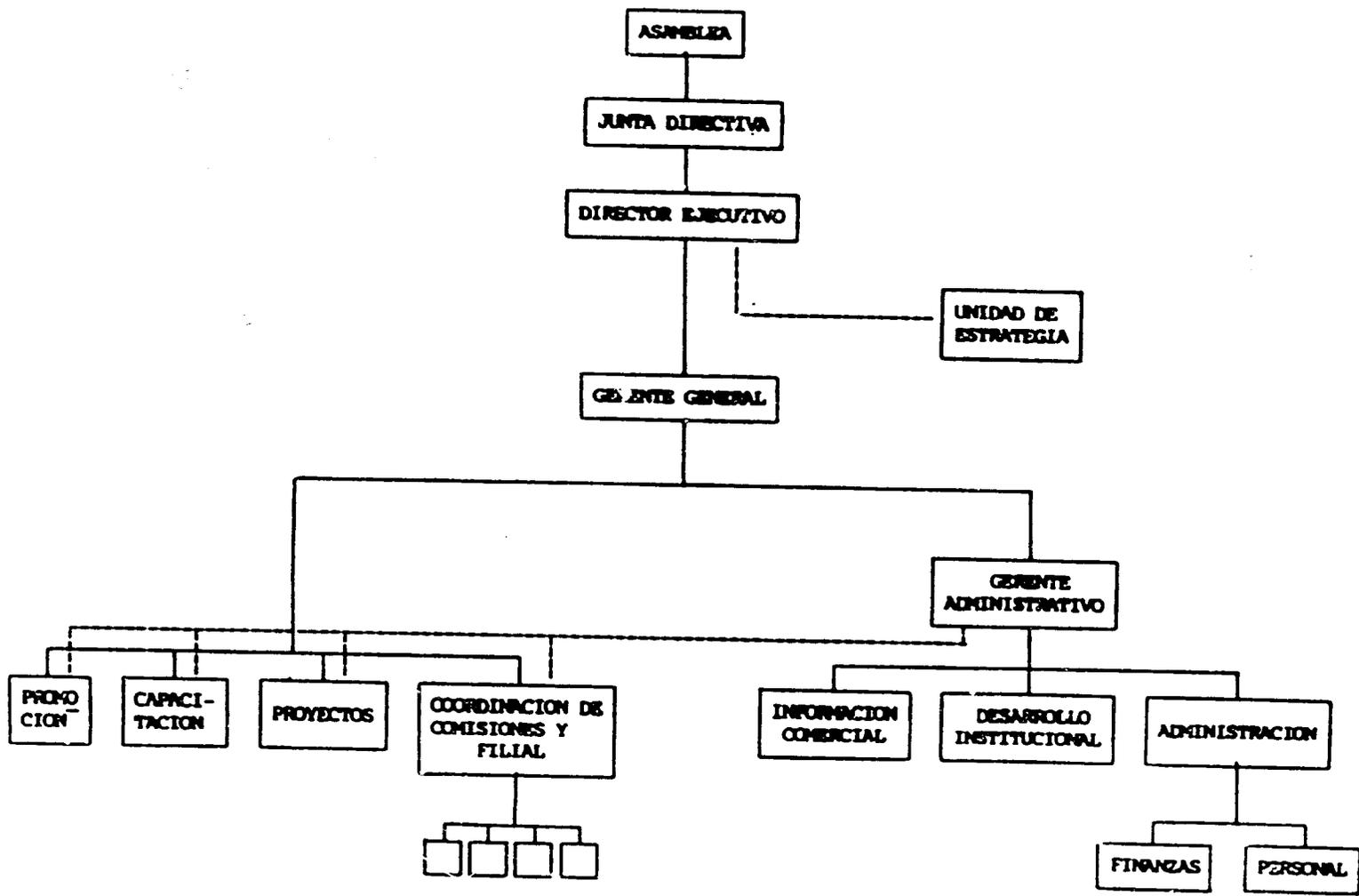
### Sub-commissions

- \* Cut flower subcommission
  - \* Mango subcommission
  - \* Asparagus subcommission
  - \* Ornamental plants subcommission
  - \* Snow pea subcommission
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## C. Operational Organization

The Gremial organization (Table 2) is divided into seven departments; each has been assigned specific responsibilities and reports to the general manager, then to the executive director, and finally to the board of directors.

Table 2. GREMIAL DEPARTMENTAL ORGANIZATION



Though linked to the Guatemalan Chamber of Commerce and housed in the Chamber's office building, the Gremial operates autonomously. Financial support derives from: a.) an annual fee assessed members; b.) sales of certain publications; and, c.) funding provided through a bilateral assistance program.

## II. THE GREMIAL AND COMMUNICATION

### A. General Approach to Communication

A logical, if idealized, approach to communication for an organization can be set forth as:

1. identify various target audiences;
2. define the nature, scope, and frequency of information these audiences need to receive;
3. determine the most effect methods for communicating the identified information to these audiences;
4. develop an organizational plan for conducting a communications effort that efficiently delivers the identified information to the targeted audiences; and,
5. implement the indicated communications program.

An organization utilizing this approach very likely would not start with a blank slate: virtually any organization would be conducting some level of communication. However, the cited five-step approach can be effectively utilized if first considered in the abstract, and then related to a particular organization's existing communication effort, available resources, and current constraints. Frequently a communications strategy would be implemented in several phases over time.

The classic communication model of a source sending a message via a channel to a receiver needs amplification to more accurately portray the loop nature of communication. Formal or informal feedback from the receiver, or target, provides the

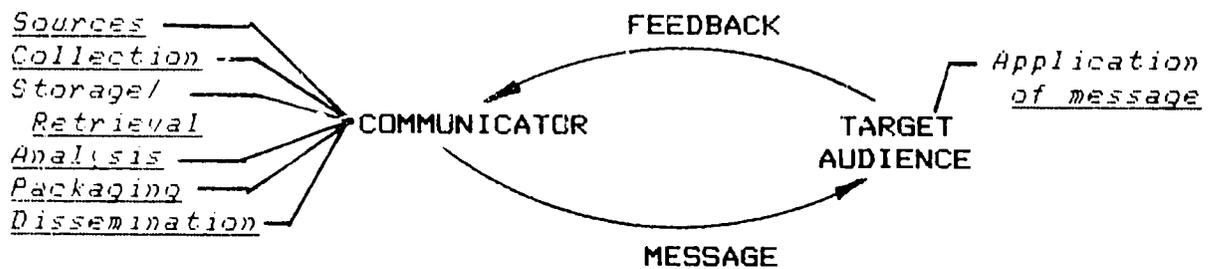
sending source with information: 1.) confirming whether the message was received or not; 2.) indicating whether the desired action was taken by the receiver; and, 3.) suggesting changes that might be made in future communications to increase the desired impact of the sender's messages.

Chart 1 graphically depicts the sender-to-receiver communication loop, as well as the various functions surrounding and contributing to the process as might be applied to an entity such as the Gremial. Not all these functions would occur for all types of information. However, each of the processes occurs at some point and needs to be factored into the overall framework of the Gremial's information sector.

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**Chart 1. THE COMMUNICATION CONTINUUM**

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One clear implication is that the Gremial's communication activities encompass far more than information dissemination. A second inference that can be drawn is that each step in the process needs to be considered for its relationship to, and impact on, other steps. Each of the functions requires a decision as to its manner and method of performance. For example, how information is collected links directly with how it

might be stored, how it might be packaged, and ultimately the method for its dissemination. "A Simplified Model of the Information Dissemination Process" (Annex #1) offers greater detail.

### B. Communication at the Gremial

The Gremial has evolved an active communication thrust during its relatively short life span. The key word is "evolved," implying a process of continual review and adjusting of communication strategy to effectively meet changing needs. Gremial membership accelerated from zero to over 500 in six years; markets have begun to mature; and a significant group of Gremial members have gained extensive production and exportation experience. All these factors combine to suggest the value of analyzing the Gremial's current communication activities and reviewing its communications strategies for the future.

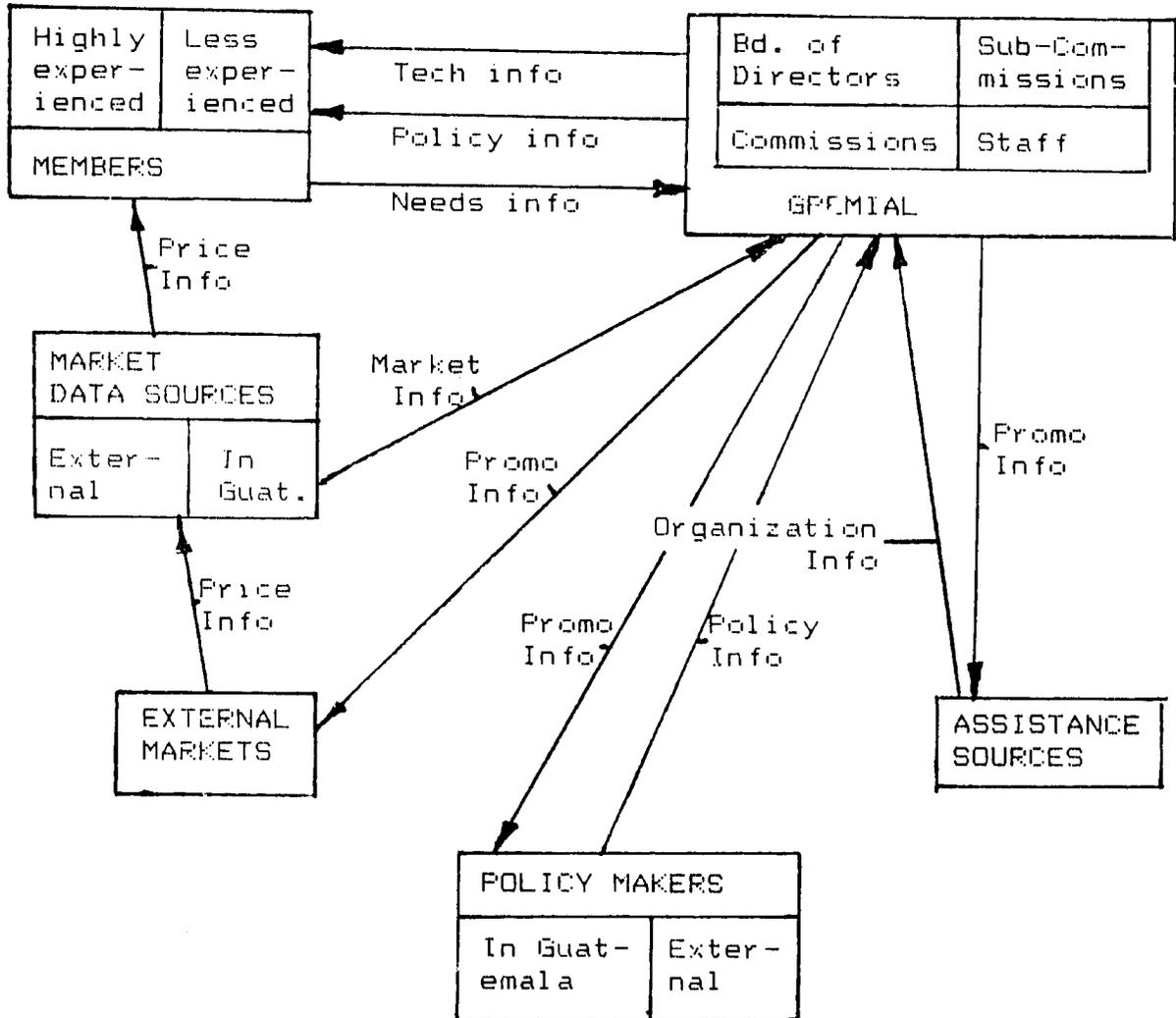
The Gremial is positioned at the hub of an information exchange network that connects the Guild with its members, markets, policy makers, and information source points. Chart 2 portrays a simplified linkage between the Gremial, its information source points, and its target audiences, as well as the nature and direction of information flows.

### III. CURRENT GREMIAL INFORMATION COMMUNICATION ACTIVITIES

In early 1988, Gremial staff received a form of feedback from members regarding information dissemination. A weekly agricultural products price bulletin published and disseminated by the Gremial was halted. Instead of the anticipated outcry from Gremial members who received the bulletin indicating that

it contained needed information and that publication should be continued, there were virtually no protest.

Chart 2. GREMIAL AUDIENCES AND COMMUNICATION FLOWS



The PROEXAG project marketing specialist offered one explanation: the bulletin quoted Port of New York market prices, rather than Miami or Los Angeles prices, information that had virtually no application to the needs of Guatemalan exporters. This occurrence--feedback from a prime target audience--played a

role in triggering an analysis of the Gremial's communication activities.

The next sections examine elements in the Gremial's communication process starting with target audiences (again referring to Chart 2) and working back around the communication loop (Chart 1) to dissemination and finally information handling functions.

#### A. Target Audiences for Gremial Communications

As previously shown, the Gremial--to foster the welfare of private sector non-traditional products exporters--faces the challenge of communicating with multiple audiences. Broadly these include current and potential exporters, product producers, market and transportation segments (such as buyers, investors, and shippers), policy makers, and public sector organizations. Each audience has both unique, as well as overlapping, information needs.

Gremial target audiences also can be segmented on the basis of language capability, membership in the Gremial, domestic or international location, and by specific product groups.

Any system chosen to define specific audiences will, of necessity, include inconsistencies and overlapping categories. For this report, important audiences for Gremial communications are grouped under four headings.

##### 1. Members

As an association of private sector organizations and individuals, the Gremial clearly has a primary obligation to communicate with its members. Gremial members, numbering well over 500 in mid-1988, represent diverse product groups, as well

as a wide range of production expertise and export sophistication. However, a common interest of members (and their allied "need to know") that cuts across all products and sophistication levels relates to their active interest in matters related to exportation.

The member audience also can be characterized as basically being entrepreneurial and more risk-taking than risk-averse.

## 2. Entities that are not Gremial members

A less well-defined group comprises individuals and organizations that may be currently engaged in exporting non-traditional products, or considering that possibility. The Gremial can serve as the main source of useful information for this group. In the process, the Guild performs a valuable service, tends to gain members, and thereby builds increased strength.

## 3. Market entities (buyers, shippers, and transporters)

This group stands as a critical link between producers and product markets. The Gremial serves the needs of its members by regularly disseminating promotion-oriented information to export-related entities such as buyers and transportation organizations, especially outside the country. There is also a critically important inbound flow of information from this audience.

## 4. Policy makers and the public sector

The Gremial seeks to keep policy-making bodies, and the public sector in general, well informed and current on non-traditional product export by periodically disseminating information to regulatory agencies, ministries, special missions

in Guatemala, Guatemalan embassies abroad, and other organizations.

Further audience segmentation occurs in that all-Spanish, or all-English communications "reach" only those recipients capable of understanding that particular language. Charging recovery costs for a communication (such as a publication, or a market bulletin service) also can define an audience by eliminating all those unwilling to, or incapable of, paying the cost.

## **B. Information Dissemination Methods**

Gremial communication activities traditionally have centered around production and distribution of publications, organizing and sponsoring seminars, and providing information (in response to requests) by making available materials stored at the Gremial, either directly to "walk-in" requestors, or by photocopying and mailing selected materials in response to written or telephoned requests.

### **1. Print materials**

The Gremial has produced and disseminated materials ranging from a monthly newsletter/newsbooklet to specialized 'one-time-only' technical booklets. Table 3, Gremial Publications, presents specific detailed information for a majority of Gremial publications. Conclusions drawn from information in this table indicate that:

- a.) Print materials have formed the backbone of Gremial information dissemination efforts.
- b.) The Gremial staff has reached most, if not all, of its important audiences, at least occasionally.

Table 3. GREMIAL PUBLICATIONS

title:	Data-Export	"Guias"	GRIPROW	Memoria de Labores 1987-88	Boletin de Precios	Boletin Bibliografico	Plan de Trabajo	Guatemalan Exporters	Guatemalan Fresh Cut Flowers
purpose:	Keep members and others aware of Gremial activities	Provide "how to" information	Describe Gremial and its activities	Report activities for one year	Provide market information	Report on publications received	Report on plan of work for coming year	Promote Guatemalan non-traditional products	Promote Guatemalan cut flowers
target audience:	Members and others with an interest in export	Producer-exporters	English speaking contacts outside Gremial	Gremial members	Members in agricultural sector	Members	Members	Potential buyers	Potential buyers
Content:	Varies with issue; general export topics	Production, post-harvest handling, and marketing	Description of Gremial	Text and charts reporting activities	Market data	List of publications	Proposed activities	Name, address and phone for Guatemalan non-traditional product exporters	Color photos and descriptions
started:	Nov 86	Nov 88	1988	1988	Jan 1987	Dec 1986		1986	
terminated:					Feb 1988				
frequency:	monthly	one time	one time	Annual	Weekly	Monthly	Annual	Periodic	Periodic
distribution:	all members; special list 1) 100 to Gremial in Quetzaltenango	By sale at Gremial	Casual; as needed	Members	Members only 120 copies	Members; public organizations	Members, others with interest in Gremial		
method of distribution:	special delivery for local; postal otherwise	Sale	Hand out	Postal	Special delivery	Special delivery, Postal			
responsibility:	Commercial Information Department	Projects Department	Promotion and Institutional departments	All departments	Commercial Information Department	Commercial Information Department	Executive Department and Commercial Information Department		
cost:	Q 3,100 for 1,500 copies [2]	Q 32,000 for 250 ea of 16			Q 1.50/copy [3]	Q 0.50/copy			
comment:	replaces Boletin Informativo Spanish version only	Sales price Q 30.00/ea Q 480/set	English only			Print run; 625 pages, both sides, 2 colors	Sell at Q 3.00/copy	In English	In English
		Consulting fee to collect information and write US \$ 42.00		[1] Special list Embassies, special missions, ministries		[2] Printing cost only		[3] Includes cost of phone call to PROWET	

- c.) "Special delivery" and regular postal channels have been fairly reliable in transmitting information to recipients, but lacked the immediacy generally associated with market data, typically such as for fresh produce.
- d.) Publication cost information, as made available, was not extensive nor did it include Gremial staff costs or mailing costs. Also in regard to cost, at least one major series of production/post-harvest handling bulletins (for 16 non-traditional crops) was available only through purchase (at Q30 per copy).
- e.) Publication preparation and production responsibility was not fully centered in any one department. The Commercial Information Department, however, was the most actively involved group.
- f.) The latest venture into dissemination of market information to members ('Boletín de Precios') was terminated in February 1988.

## 2. Other Information Dissemination Activities

The Gremial has no history of information dissemination via broadcast (radio or TV), audio or video cassettes, nor other media. Periodic seminars on technical topics have been organized and presented on an ad hoc basis.

## C. Information Sources

Sources for the information disseminated by the Gremial are mainly (again referring to Chart 2) market data sources, and policy making organizations (both inside and outside Guatemala) and, to a lesser degree, the actions of members themselves as manifested through the Commissions and sub-commissions.

The nature of the products exported by a large percentage of Gremial members will have direct influence over which market data sources need to be brought into the Guild's information collection network.

D. Collection, Storage, Analysis

1. Information collection

Collection methods have included direct contact via international telephone calls, plus accumulation of printed materials from a variety of sources. The PROEXAG project has made a special effort to channel a variety of agricultural export information (mostly in printed form) to the the Gremial.

2. Storage, analysis, and retrieval

The Commercial Information Department maintains a technical library organized around a cataloging system, and employs a staff member to review incoming print materials, analyze their content, and assign appropriate catalog codings.

The same employee is involved with retrieving materials when needed.

E. Nature of Information on the Gremial Communicates

1. 'Market intelligence' information

Export, particularly related to commodities and markets that are dramatically impacted by a host of rapidly changing factors--often geographically widespread, requires information upon which to base export decisions. This 'market intelligence' information is needed

frequently and regularly. It also needs to be:

- a.) authoritative: emanate from knowledgeable, reliable sources;

- b.) valid: represent actual, applicable conditions;
- c.) correct: free of errors, either in origin or transmission;
- d.) timely: current information that reaches recipients while still usable.

## 2. General information

A major category covering numerous kinds of information disseminated by the Gremial to various audiences, but characterized by the absence of time-sensitivity when compared to market intelligence information. General information would encompass public and promotional information.

## F. Information Dissemination Responsibilities

The Commercial Information Department, though primarily concerned with capturing, storing, and providing market information to Gremial members, also approaches being a de facto general information entity. It bears primary responsibility for producing both the Gremial's two current monthly publications; but it also provides certain services for print communications originating (and controlled) by other departments.

Each Gremial department, by dint of its assigned tasks, is involved with and shoulders some responsibility for communication of information. There did not appear to be centralization of overall responsibility nor actual function, at least in terms of a single department solely dedicated to conceptualization, support, and dissemination of information.

## G. Communication Concerns

Members of the Commercial Information Department, in response to queries, expressed a belief that there are

opportunities to expand current Gremial information activities, particularly in the areas of providing timely market data, and in providing more information support for the non-agricultural sectors.

(Note: there are references to planned communications-related activities spelled out in the Plan de Trabajo, Julio 1988-Junio 1989 that need to be reviewed and integrated into any communications analysis).

#### IV. LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

##### A. Evolving Aspects of an Information Effort

###### 1. Gremial members: numbers and nature

The Gremial experienced a period of rapid membership growth. If the growth follows a predictable curve, the rate of growth in terms of members will slow and approach the plateau of replacement and zero growth. The slackening in new Gremial members will occur as the number of firms and individuals involved with, or wanting to become involved with, export of non-traditional products, and who are not currently Gremial members, will decrease. Market saturation also can exert a dampening effect on the number of new members that join the Guild.

One implication for a slowing or static membership condition will be the shifting nature of the membership. For instance, less emphasis will be needed on "how-to-start-exporting" information and more on information to service an increasingly experienced, sophisticated membership.

Communications will have to be tuned to the level of member export maturity.

## 2. Appeal of Printed Information Products

Potential Gremial audiences can be classified according to interest in the Gremial, its activities and services, by membership status (in the Gremial) and by lingual group. Table 4 attempts to predict the interest level of audiences (categorized as indicated) in the range of current Gremial publications.

The results, if found to hold true, could be utilized first to fine-tune the range of publications produced and their distribution, and second as a management tool for gaining the most effective impact of allocating limited resources to information dissemination.

## 3. Information delivery systems

The constantly changing technology of information capture, storage, and delivery impacts most organizations and will, therefore, need to be carefully assessed at the Gremial. Table 5 attempts to evaluate the potential of reaching various audiences with a range of information delivery methods.

If the assumptions supporting the information in Table 5 have validity, quite clearly print delivery systems will remain an especially strong element of Gremial communications. Also, the possibility of telephonic access to a recorded message--such as daily market information--appears worth considering.

Computers are already in place at the Gremial, at most information source points, and at many members' place of business. The technology to link these together in an

Table 4. POTENTIAL AUDIENCES FOR VARIOUS GREMIAL PRINTED INFORMATION PRODUCTS

publications	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
<u>I. INTEREST GROUP</u>											
A. Potential Exporters											
1. with experience producing for domestic market:	○	○	●	○	○	-	-				
2. without experience:	○	-	○	●	○	○	-				
B. Actual Exporters											
1. interested in improving their existing business:	●	-	○	●	●	○	-				
2. interested in exporting different products:	●	-	○	●	○	○	○				
C. Potential Investors and Buyers											
1. in Guatemala:	○	○	●	○	-	○	-				
2. outside Guatemala:	○	●	●	-	-	○	-				
<u>II. MEMBERSHIP STATUS</u>											
A. Gremial members:	●	○	●	●	○	●	●				
B. Non-members											
1. exporters:	●	○	●	○	○	○	○				
2. others:	○	○	○	-	-	○	○				
<u>III. LINGUAL GROUP</u>											
A. Bi-lingual:	●	○	○	○	○	○	○				
B. Spanish only:	●	-	-	●	○	○	○				
C. English only:	-	○	○	-	-	-	-				

Publications	Potential
no. title	
1 Data Export	
2 GEXPRONT (basic brochure)	● strong
3 Guatemala Exporters	
4 Guias (production, post-harvest management, marketing)	○ minimal
5 Boletin Bibliografico	
6 Memoria de Labores	- none
7 Plan de Trabajo	

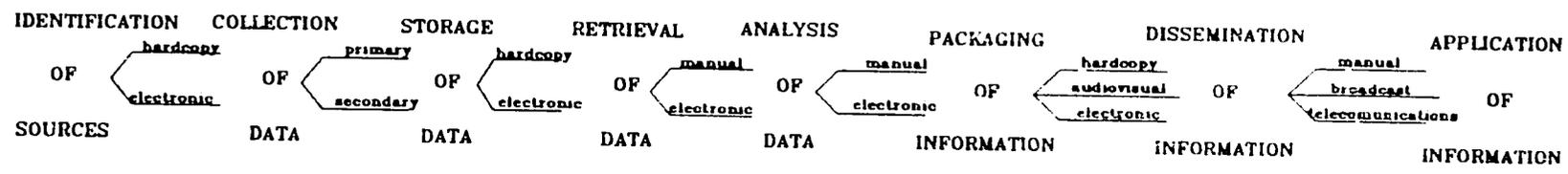
Table 5. POTENTIAL AUDIENCES FOR GREMIAL INFORMATION DELIVERED BY VARIOUS MEDIA

media	print	commercial radio	commercial TV	cassettes audio	cassettes video	CB radio	telex	fax	computer modem	seminar	recorded phone message
audiences by											
<u>I. INTEREST GROUP</u>											
A. Potential Exporters											
1. with experience producing for the domestic market:	●	●	●	●	●	○	●	○	○	●	●
2. without experience:	●	●	●	○	○	○	○	-	-	●	●
B. Actual Exporters											
1. interested in improving their existing business:	●	●	●	●	●	○	●	●	○	●	●
2. interested in exporting different products:	●	●	●	○	○	○	●	●	●	●	●
C. Potential Investors and Buyers											
1. in Guatemala:	●	○	○	○	○	○	●	●	○	●	●
2. outside Guatemala:	●	-	-	○	○	-	●	●	●	-	-
<u>II. MEMBERSHIP STATUS</u>											
A. Gremial members:	●	●	●	●	●	●	○	○	●	●	●
B. Non-members											
1. exporters:	●	●	○	○	○	-	○	●	○	○	●
2. others:	●	○	○	○	-	-	-	●	○	○	-
<u>III. LINGUAL GROUP</u>											
A. Bi-lingual:	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	○	●	●
B. Spanish only:	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	○	○	●	●
C. English only:	●	-	-	-	-	-	○	○	○	-	-
Potential: ● strong ○ minimal - none											

information gathering/disseminating network is readily available, but relies on the telephone system which, in Guatemala at the present, is neither well enough established nor reliable enough to be utilized as a primary communication system.

In addition to the limitations of Guatel, opting for a computer-oriented information system involves acquiring a base microcomputer with sufficient capacity, establishing a means for members to access it, and dedicating trained staff personnel to operate the system. Implications: the approach holds future potential for Gremial, but also will incur added costs that will have to be covered by either user fees or other means.

# A SIMPLIFIED MODEL OF THE INFORMATION DISSEMINATION PROCESS



**ANNEX 2. Possibilities for Strengthening Gremial  
Information-related Activities**

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Given the Gremial's rapid growth the information/communication activity need make no apologies. There is the opportunity now, however, to evolve from a somewhat ad hoc posture to a more formalized information structure through development of and commitment to an organizational information/communication strategy.

In addition to the benefit of establishing mid- to long-range goals, a more unified information posture also could have the benefit of making members more aware of the organization's commitment to their welfare, and also give information/communication more visibility.

A series of ideas follow that concern Gremial communication functions and speak to the concept of fine-tuning the current effort.

1.) A review of communications program responsibilities within the Gremial staff might help to pinpoint opportunities for constructive shifts. The objective would be to gain increased information flow efficiency, avoid overlapping responsibilities, and serve the members more effectively.

a.) For instance, all information activities might be consolidated in a Public Information Department;

b.) Consideration could be given to establishing a Members Service section.

2). Developing full cost information associated with information activities and publications would be useful in

formulating plans and in developing benefit/cost ratios. A B/C analysis could then help to determine how limited resources might be allocated among current or proposed information initiatives.

3.) The Gremial emerged from the desires of individuals to create an organization to foster their common interests. Thus, a 'people orientation' should remain foremost in the Gremial's operating credo. Some approaches:

- a.) Conduct periodic poll's of members to ascertain their information needs;
- b.) Consider including a return, self-mail postal card ("Bingo card") in each monthly issue of Data-Export so that interested recipients could request copies of listed publications or further information about specific articles or equipment etc.;
- c.) Start a "Members speak out" section in Data-Export;
- d.) Periodically print profiles of various members;

4.) Steps to enhance member's ability to access information held at the Gremial main office would be worthwhile.

- a.) Record a summary of selected market prices each day on a phone answering machine that could then be accessed on a subscription basis by Gremial members (and possibly non-members) who chose to call the Gremial;
- b.) The current location of the Gremial in an office tower that manifests an isolated, cold, impersonal feeling tends not to be conducive to an industry founded on 'deals' and

23

ready access. Thought might be given to relocating to a friendlier, warmer site.

5.) A goal would be to mandate graphic consistency across all printed materials so that an easily recognized organizational identity becomes evident. The recently redesigned Gremial logo provides a strong foundation and warrants widespread use as a starting point for an organizational identity effort.

6.) Pictograms, as used in the Boletin Bibliografico, provide a strong visual element worthy of wider application.

7.) Gremial information and communications can benefit from:

- a.) Following an approach geared to the needs of people who are basically risk takers, and entrepreneurs who seek assistance in the form of "news they can use," but not coddling;
- b.) Working to gain the confidence of receivers through provision of communication that are worth the time to read, view, or listen to;
- c.) Consistently displaying high professional quality, but not exorbitant cost;
- d.) Developing a consistent and unique personality and "feel" that builds recognition;
- e.) Generating a sense ownership and pride among recipients ("this is my organization's newsletter").