



**Interreg
Europe**



European Union | European Regional Development Fund

Seminar on communication 23 January 2020

How to get in the media

Workshop on press releases
do's, dont's and golden rules

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ahoj – alo – bok – bonjour –
ciao – dia duit – geia sas –
guten tag – hallo – hello –
helló – hej – hei – hi – hola –
olá – sveicināti – sveiki – zdraveíte

Agenda for the next 75 mins

- Background – who are we?
- Setting the scene – today’s media landscape
- The building blocks of a good press release
- Make a selling press release out of a concrete project
- Presentation and discussion of results
- Take aways and golden rules

Fast facts about us

Marie-Louise Arnfast

- MA Rhetoric, Communication & History, MBA
- Former Head of communications at IBM Denmark

Michael Kirkeby

- MA Literature
- Former Country Manager at Text 100

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Setting the scene

Your role and how the media works

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Managing expectations



Best type of coverage?

Earned coverage (aka old media):

- Appearance through editorial selection
- In papers, verticals, tv, radio
- Formats: interviews, feature articles, commentary, by-lines
- Pros: Credibility, audience already in place
- Cons: Hard to get

Owned coverage (aka new media):

- Appearance through ownership
- News-letter, website & SoMe-sites
- Pros: Easy coverage, no editorial bottleneck
- Cons: Less credibility, hard to build audience

The changing media landscape

– the ultra short version of changes during the past 10 years

The two major influences on the media:

- Who took the money? GAFA!
- The smartphone

The journalistic workload

Understanding who we are talking to

- **Typical workday for a news story journalist in the old days**
 - Receives 20 press releases
 - 1 story every day,
 - One deadline a day
- **Typical workday for a journalist today**
 - Receives 50 press releases
 - 3 stories every day
 - 24/7 deadline
 - Different versions for print and online, publishing on SoMe, photos, video, podcast
- **What this means!**
 - Having to choose between more potential stories
 - Less time to write each article
 - Inclination to go for the 'safe' story
 - Less time to take a chance

OBS – In VERY general terms!

Get in touch and get attention – how? (1/2)

Remember: you are just one of many ‘sales persons’ in a crowded market

ALWAYS DO YOUR RESEARCH

- Put your story into a larger perspective and context
- It’s all about the timing - a non story today can be a great story tomorrow

SOLO STORY, PRESS RELEASE – OR BOTH?

- Pros and cons of solo stories versus releases
- Offending someone? Relations building, securing coverage
- How to do both

A PRESS RELEASE IS NOT A PITCH

- A pitch is targeted and tailor made communications
- A bit similar to a job application process

Get in touch and get attention – how? (2/2)

FIND THE RIGHT MEDIA – AND THE RIGHT JOURNALIST

- Who has written similar stories before?
- Find good arguments for more stories on the same storyline

CALL OR MAIL – OR BOTH?

- The eternal question – different journalists have different preferences
- Let the journalist know you have read his/her former articles on the subject
- Be service minded and a good colleague to the journalist
- Don't brag - be honest!

FOLLOW UP

- Send an e-mail confirming your agreement with the journalist
- If no coverage, then consider writing a by-line (thought leadership)

The human attention span is dwindling

Study from Nielsen Media Research:

Attention span, 2018



Goldfish

9

seconds



Humans

8

seconds

Attention dropped from 12 seconds in 2000 to just 8 seconds in 2018 — beating out the ever-distracted goldfish, which clocks in at 9 seconds.

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In short

- *Stay positive – work with the opportunities*
- *Be realistic – never guarantee coverage*
- *Get to the point – you only have little time to make an impression*

Making a good press release

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Looking at your own releases

Overall conclusion: They are very different!

Some general issues:

- Using only project title as headline – a press release is not a report
- Use of cryptic project titles – with no explaining
- Use of implied professional terms and abbreviations – which journalists might not know
- Focus on launch date of a project – not why the project is important
- Very long sentences – difficult to understand
- Abstract language in general – difficult to read in a hurry

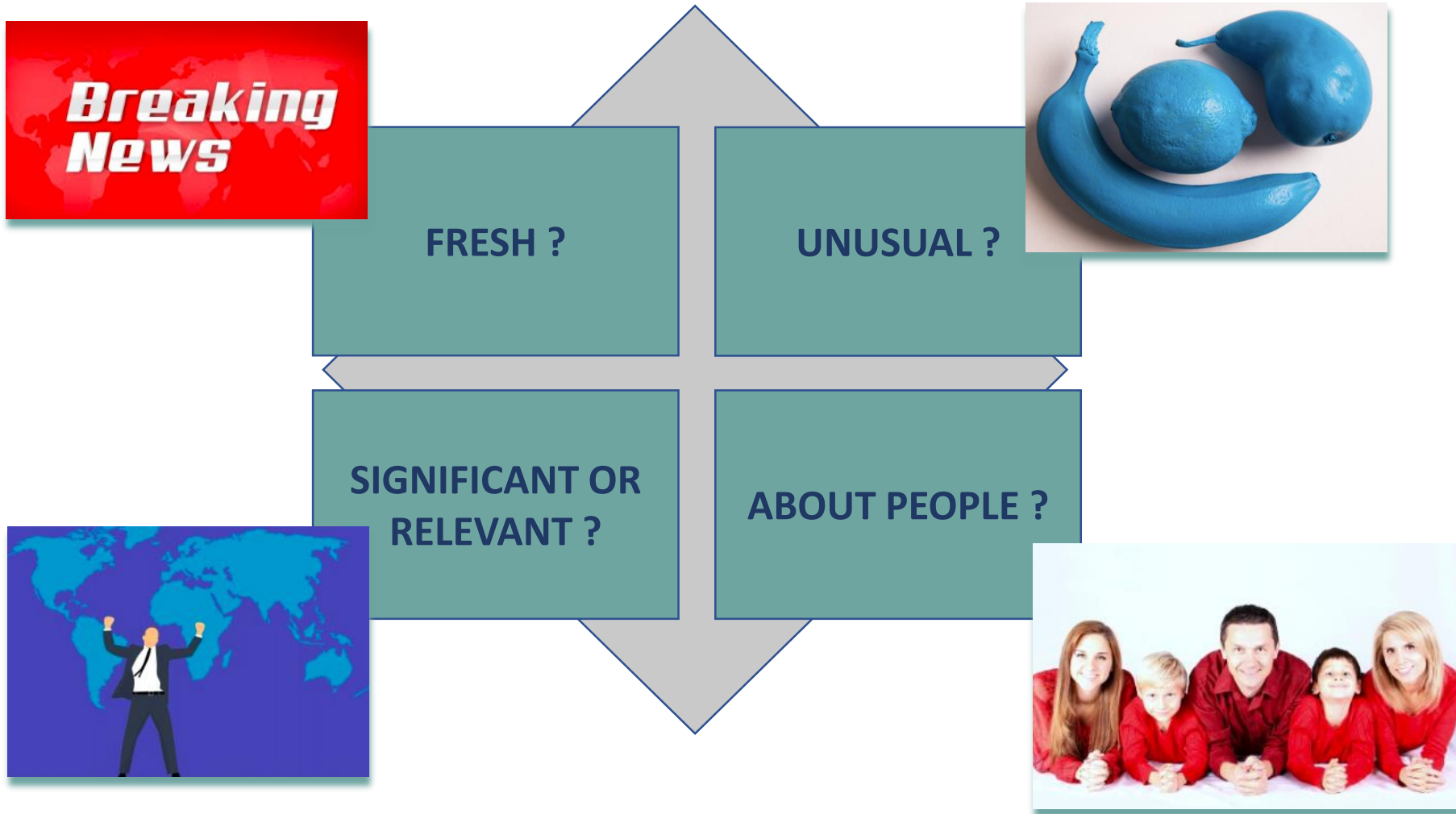
Looking at your own releases

Overall conclusion: They are very different!

Some headlines work fine, but can still be better:

- *“Northern Netherlands is leading a European project on innovation development”* (what type of innovation?)
- *“Renewables Making their Way in Industry”* (what kind?)
- *“Is a circular economy always sustainable? - EU project examines business activities based on circular economy”* (hint of conclusion?)
- *“Major industrial nations in the EU convene to meet energy targets”*

What you need to look for in your story



Select your target group



- Citizens in general ?
- Professionals ?

And then select your media



Select your angle



- Which key messages do you want to deliver?
- What is relevant and interesting for your target group?

News jacking: Golden opportunities



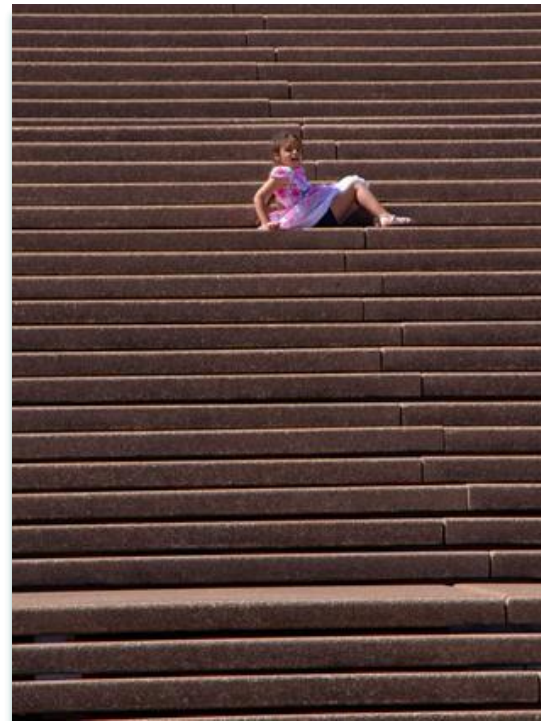
More than £1bn of food wasted before reaching supermarkets - study

Wrap report finds 3.6m tonnes of food is thrown away or fed to animals each year in the UK

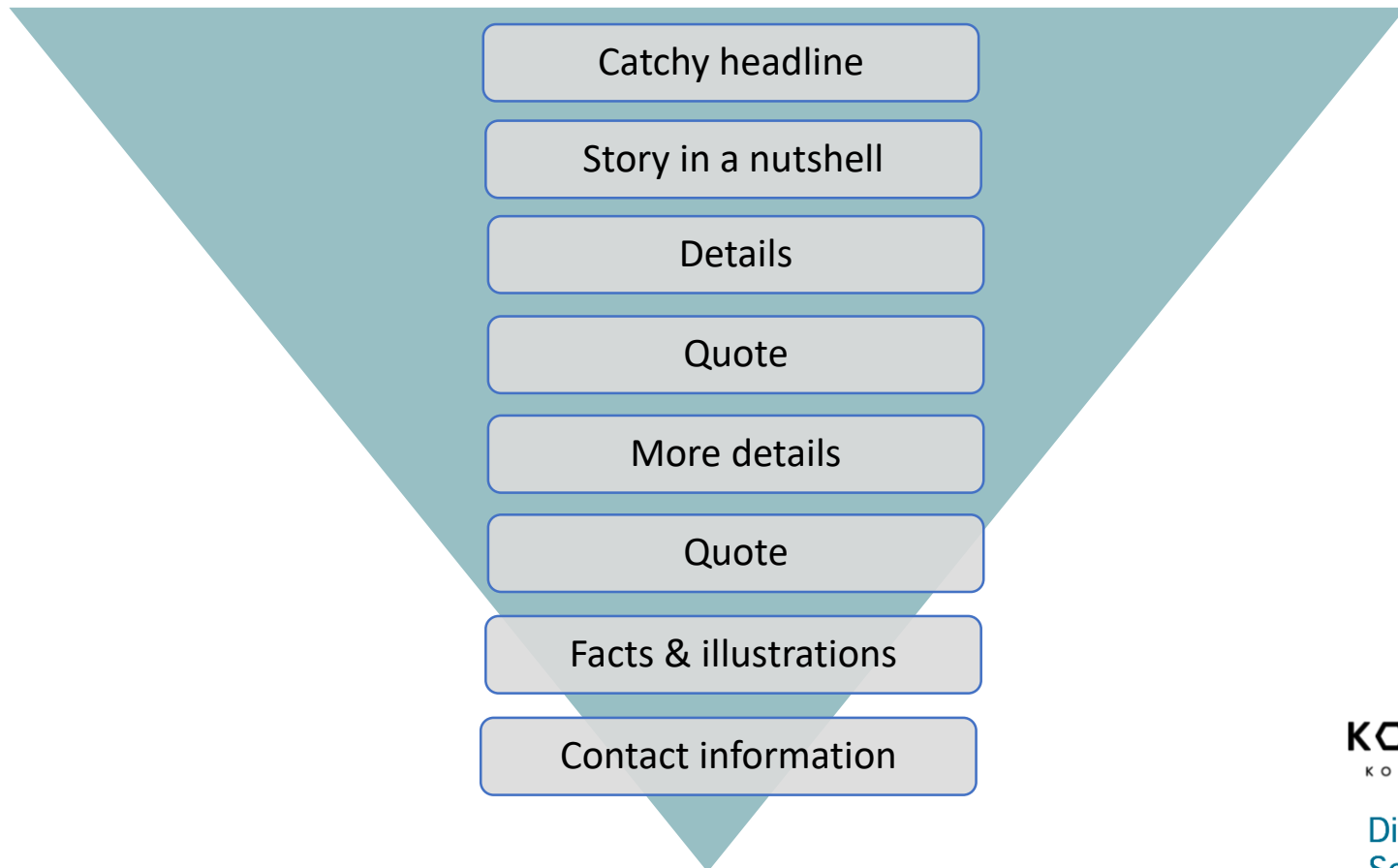


Keep your focus – 1 story

- Stick to your angle
- Don't try to tell a lot of stories
- Max 3 key messages
- Kill your darlings!



Use the inverted pyramid



Keep it simple



- Short sentences
- Use subheads
- No abbreviations
- No jargon
- Be specific – not abstract
- No repetitions
- Answer What, Who, Why, When & How

Example

Press release

Copenhagen (date)

Liquid electricity ready within a few months

This summer, the first drops of methanol will appear from a plant that is soon to be established in North Jutland. The fuel, which is produced on the basis of hydrogen and CO₂, can be Denmark's next business adventure, because it can be based on renewable energy and help make the heavy transport green. Customers are ready to purchase the product, which is expected to deliver a positive business case in the short term.

Turnkey plants

With the establishment of the plant, which is the first of its kind in Denmark, the parties behind the project expect to have created the basis for a complete, standardized and modular methanol plant, which can be installed locally in connection with companies that emit CO₂. It may be biogas plants that can achieve better business results by utilizing CO₂ to produce methanol instead of discharging it into the atmosphere.

Exploitation of renewable energy from wind and solar

In addition to CO₂, hydrogen is included in the production of methanol. The methanol plant therefore includes an electrolysis unit supplied by the project partner GreenHydrogen. The unit converts electricity into hydrogen, and when the electricity is produced at times when it is cheap, methanol

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Example

Exploitation of renewable energy from wind and solar

In addition to CO₂, hydrogen is included in the production of methanol. The methanol plant therefore includes an electrolysis unit supplied by the project partner GreenHydrogen. The unit converts electricity into hydrogen, and when the electricity is produced at times when it is cheap, methanol production can be an extra good business. This may be the case, for example, at night when there is a lot of wind energy in the grid.

Electrofuels such as methanol - or "liquid electricity" as it is popularly called - are expected to have a breakthrough in the coming years. By producing electrofuels, electricity from wind turbines can be utilized during periods when capacity exceeds demand, and thus they can also contribute to ensuring the necessary balance between consumption and grid demand. The "liquid electricity" from renewable energy sources can be transferred to the transport sector and used in the contexts where batteries are not sufficient: at long distances and in heavy traffic.

The methanol market is on its way

There is already a prospect of a methanol market in the transport sector. Methanol can be used in existing internal combustion engines if it is mixed with gasoline, and it can replace other admixture fuels which often need to be imported. The trade association Drivkraft Danmark, which is a partner in the project, sees great prospects in the use of methanol in the future.

- We must replace fossil fuels with liquid electricity, among other things. We believe that electrofuels based on electricity from renewable energy sources can become absolutely crucial to the green conversion of the transport, and we are ready to offer the green methanol at the gas stations when available, says Jacob Stahl Otte, director of Drivkraft Denmark

Example

Turnkey plants will be offered in the market in 2021

The methanol production project - Power2Met - is initially established as a pilot project at Aalborg University, which is a partner in the project. The next step is to establish production in connection with a biogas plant. By 2021, the solution is expected to be offered to the market.

Hydrogen is the lego brick in the energy system of the future

The Power2Met project is based, among other things, on the experience gained from the HyBalance project in Hobro. Here, one of Europe's largest and most advanced hydrogen production plant, based on primarily wind turbine power, has been opened a few months ago with EU support.

- We see hydrogen as a lego brick in the energy system of the future. Hydrogen production can be used to store excess electricity from renewable energy sources such as solar and wind. The hydrogen can be used, as it is, in the transport sector and in the industry - or it can be refined to, for example, methanol as in the Power2Met project, says Søren Bjerregaard Pedersen, CEO of Hydrogen Valley, a partner in both the HyBalance project and the Power2Met project. .

Partners behind the project

The Power2Met project has just received financial support from the EUDP for the establishment of the facility at Aalborg University. GreenHydrogen, which will deliver the electrolysis plant, is behind the application together with Re::Integrate, which develops the reactor for the production of methanol, Aalborg University, Hydrogen Valley, E.ON, NGF Nature Energy, Drivkraft Danmark, Rockwool, Process Engineering, Holtec Automatic-Nord and Lillegaarden EL.

Example

More information

The HyBalance project: www.hybalance.eu.

Contact for more information

Søren Bjerregaard Pedersen, CEO, Hydrogen Valley, part of the House of Energy, mail, mobile

Jacob Stahl Otte, Director, Drivkraft Danmark, mail, mobile

Marie-Louise Arnfast, Communication Manager, mail, mobile

Your best pm-version of a project

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Draft a selling press release

At each table: Use the next 25 mins to discuss and draft the best press release based on a real case.

OBS: Feel free to use your imagination and add more information to make the release compelling!

Your task:

- Decide on the story and the angle
- Decide on what type of media you aim for (dailies, TV, verticals?)
- Write a catchy headline
- Write a sharp introduction – the story in a nutshell
- What sources / spokespersons could enrich the story?
- Suggestions for illustrations?
- AND: If you could, what more info would you ask the project team about

Use the inverted pyramid



Presentation of draft releases

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Present your releases

Topics to discuss:

- What works great?
- What is difficult in writing a press release?
- What is most important to work on when you go home?

Wrap up and take aways

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10 golden rules: Press releases

- Is your story newsworthy? Fresh, relevant, unusual, about people
- Chose an angle that will be interesting for your target group AND the journalist
- Stick to your angle – don't mess up with many different stories
- Use the inverted pyramid: Important things first – catchy headline
- Highlight benefits for society, citizens, specific groups or people
- Answer who, what, why, when and how
- Keep it simple – make it easy to digest. No jargon, no abbreviations, short sentences etc.
- Offer sources for further information – and ensure they are available for the journalist
- Use quotes from the sources
- Offer illustrations: photos, infographic

10 golden rules: Pitching a story

- Identify a relevant journalist at a relevant media
- Research on what this journalist has written about beforehand – get to know him/her from the articles
- Spend time on preparing - know what you will say
- Find arguments on what's in it for the journalist
- Find arguments on why it is interesting for his/her audience
- Prepare answers to negative response or questions
- When calling: Ask if journo has 2 mins for a good story
- Respect a “no thank you” to your story
- Try another media

5 golden rules: Building media relationships

- Build a good reputation – offer only relevant stories – don't waste the journalist's time
- Make it easy for the journalist to make the story – help him/her!
- Respect deadlines – and be responsive to requirements
- Give information to background – when you trust the journalist
- When asking for review of an article before publishing, only do this for fact-checking – do not try to change the angle, language, headlines etc., unless these contain factual errors.

Thank you

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- Press releases is not an exact science – and there can be several good versions out of the same case-material.
- Here are some suggestions we have made based on the cases, you have worked with

Ecowaste

Target group: Citizens in UK

Headline: Project will help reduce food waste

Intro: For every 2 tonnes of food eaten in the UK, 1 tonne is wasted. An EU-project, including Devon, will help reduce food waste, sharing good practise. A tool for households has been developed.

Sources: 1) partner 2) Devon-citizen

More information: Any tool for households?

Target group: Catering – professional magasin

Headline: Tool can reduce you food waste by x%

Intro: Food waste in the catering sector cost (number). A tool has been developed to help caterers find out how to reduce food waste and save money. The activity is part of an EU-project, in which Devon participates.

Sources: 1) partner 2) caterer

TRAM

Target group: Italian citizens

Headline: Italian Pesaro becomes bike role model for European project

Intro: Pesaro is the most bike friendly city in Italy. And its activities for bikers are now being studied closely by other European cities. This is due to an EU-project, which focus on urban mobility.

Sources: 1) partner 2) spokesperson from Pesaro

More information needed: More recent numbers?

HoCare

Target group: General public in Slovenia

Headline: Slovenia part of ambitious new EU-project fighting problems with aging population

Intro: Europe is growing old – and Slovenia even older still. In the next 10 years, the population older than 65 years old, will rise from 15 pct. today to xx pct. If nothing is done, the expenses will explode.

Bread: In Ljubljana, the [name of organization] is part of an ambitious new EU-project called HoCare (short for home care), that during the next 4 years will investigate new ways of organizing elder care.

Sources: Org. director, finance expert etc..

HoCare – vertical version

Target group: tech + business in Slovenia

Headline: Device with 5 buttons to battle loneliness amongst Slovenian pensioners

Intro: The Slovenian SPERO-project (Social Communication Platform for Seniors) makes technology simple for elders – and the business potential is promising.

Sources: project manager, tech expert etc..

SME Organics

Target group: General public in Finland

Headline: The EU to fund organic milk for Finnish school children

Intro: The market for organic food is growing but an EU programme aims to make it grow even faster in Europe. In Finland, the school children will be the first to benefit.

Quotes: Programme manager, a school director,

More information: data on milk consumption per yer ...

Other information: estimates on business potential