TOOLKIT FOR COMPETITION ADVOCACY IN ASEAN

one vision
one identity
one community

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PREFACE

The establishment of the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) on 31 December 2015 marks an important milestone towards deeper regional economic integration in ASEAN. Competition Policy and Law (CPL) plays a critical role in this context by creating a competitive, innovative and dynamic region with well-functioning markets.

Although ASEAN Member States (AMS) are at varying stages of economic development and CPL implementation, there is a common need to promote greater understanding about the benefits of fair competition among various stakeholder groups. This will contribute to a more effective enforcement of competition rules and help create a level playing field for businesses in ASEAN.

This toolkit is designed as a step-by-step guide for competition authorities (CA) in ASEAN on advocating for CPL. As each AMS has different needs and priorities, the toolkit provides a range of options to conduct advocacy activities, depending on the specific objective and stakeholder group.

INTRODUCTION

This section briefly explains what is generally meant by "competition advocacy", why and for whom this toolkit has been devised. This is in the understanding the advocacy and enforcement strategies and efforts need to be closely aligned.

DEFINITION OF COMPETITION ADVOCACY

Broadly speaking, advocacy refers to conducting activities that influence the attitudes, behaviour or decisions of individuals or entities towards a specific cause or desired outcome. In its simplest form, advocacy is structured dialogue with a common theme, delivered in a targeted manner to achieve maximum influence and outcomes. In the case of competition advocacy, this generally entails proactively promoting the benefits of competition to relevant stakeholders through non-enforcement means and with the objective of creating a competitive environment for businesses.

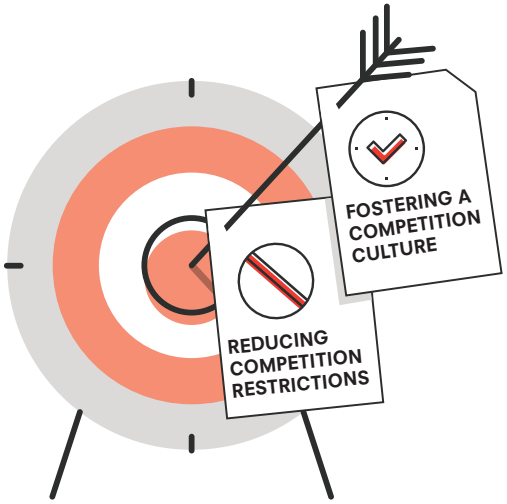
The International Competition Network (ICN) defines advocacy as:

> *Competition advocacy refers to those activities conducted by the competition authority related to the promotion of a competitive environment for economic activities by means of non-enforcement mechanisms, mainly through its relationships with other governmental entities and by increasing public awareness of the benefits of competition.*

Similarly, advocacy is defined in the "Guidelines on Developing Core Competencies in Competition Policy and Law for ASEAN" as:

> *… the range of non-enforcement activities which promote a competitive environment within an AMS. AMS acknowledge that advocacy is a fundamental tool to develop a workable competition law system.*

The scope and content of advocacy activities in each AMS can vary according to country-specific considerations and priorities. It is therefore important to understand the specific context or setting that the advocacy activity takes place in, along with the objectives and desired outcomes. The main objectives of competition advocacy are two-fold:



Fostering a competition culture:
Creating a transparent, reputable and self-compliant community that discourages anti-competitive behaviour and encourages wider economic prosperity.

Reducing competition restrictions:
Addressing and eliminating restrictive laws and anti-competitive practices that are barriers to free and fair trade.

Advocacy can range from mere awareness-raising about competition issues to advocating towards a specific competition reform or policy objective. The former can be a continuous activity of competition authorities (CA), particularly in the initial stages of implementing a competition law. The latter, on the other hand, often relies on a certain political momentum and requires more strategic thought.

PURPOSE OF THE TOOLKIT

The purpose of this toolkit is to provide AMS with practical guidance, tools and templates to develop and deliver advocacy activities for CPL. It is primarily intended for by CA in ASEAN, including Commission members, heads of departments, communications staff and case-handlers. Additionally, the contents of this toolkit may be shared with partners outside of the CA in joint efforts to foster a broad-based competition culture in ASEAN.

Determining which advocacy activity is most appropriate depends on the specific stakeholder groups that CA intend to engage. These comprise government agencies and other public authorities, businesses (including trade and business associations), media, consumers, academia, the legal community, and the judiciary. This toolkit provides advice on how to best target different groups and which messages need to be chosen. Articulating the right message for the right stakeholder group is key to carrying out successful advocacy activities.

As a "living document", this toolkit contains a collection of case studies from AMS that describe successful advocacy approaches and outcomes. As CPL implementation in AMS progresses, more case studies may be added to the toolkit, along with further tools and templates.

SECTION 1:
PLANNING ADVOCACY ACTIVITIES

This section provides guidance on developing an advocacy strategy and key considerations for tailoring advocacy activities to the specific country context. It also contains a comprehensive description of core stakeholder groups and their importance in the context of competition advocacy. The list may not be exhaustive as each AMS may choose to also address other core stakeholders that play a critical role in advancing CPL.

DEVELOPING AN ADVOCACY STRATEGY AND PLAN

A sound and comprehensive advocacy strategy is essential for a CA to encourage a broad-based competition culture. If planned in a strategic manner and implemented effectively, advocacy can help educate and engage the general public; increase business compliance with competition laws; integrate competition issues into policy decisions or debates; and ultimately empower a CA.

In conducting advocacy activities, the CA does not have to act on its own. The media and other stakeholders, such as academics or business member organisations, can also play an important role in "getting the word out" on competition.

The CA should be clear on the exact objective it is seeking to achieve through advocacy. The advocacy objectives should be aligned with the overall strategy of the CA, not least in order to complement and substantiate enforcement efforts. For instance, is the objective of advocacy to raise basic awareness of competition law among the general public; to encourage businesses to put in place competition compliance frameworks; or to ensure that government agencies include competition considerations in developing new policies?

When developing an advocacy strategy and identifying objectives, a CA may refer to the following tips:

Keep objectives manageable and realistic.	♦ Focus on the core issue, as overly ambitious advocacy plans will have a low chance of success.
Set out long-, medium- and short-term goals for the advocacy strategy.	♦ **Long-term goal:** Results or impacts that the CA wishes to achieve by the end of the advocacy campaign (e.g. increased competition compliance by businesses measured through a number of compliance programmes introduced; or increased awareness of competition issues measured through a survey undertaken). ♦ **Medium-term goals:** Milestones towards achieving the long-term goal and as benchmarks for the CA to measure progress. ♦ **Short-term goals:** Immediate outputs (e.g. in a year, the CA can set a target of 50 advocacy activities, of which 20 may be geared towards the public sector, 20 towards businesses and 10 towards civil society).

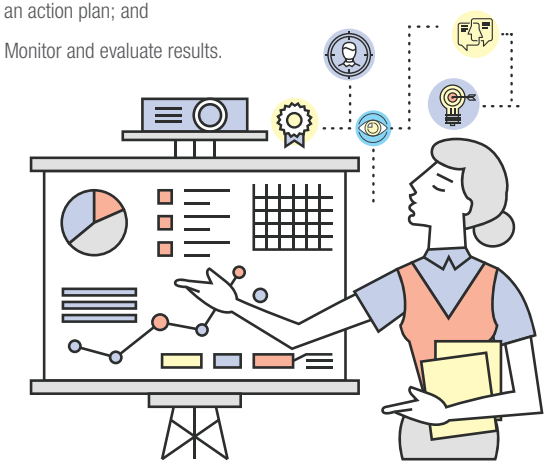
Effective CPL relies on effective advocacy and enforcement. In order to avoid giving different messages to stakeholders, it is critical that a CA's advocacy and enforcement activities are not only implemented, but also communicated in a consistent manner. In doing so, a CA may take the following into account:

- Develop and implement an annual communications plan with specific activities targeted at the key stakeholder groups identified.
- Promote and publish information on the activities of the CA that is easy to understand for all stakeholder groups.
- Work with the business community to develop user-friendly guidance on competition law compliance.
- Accept and seek opportunities and invitations to speak on competition issues, for example at luncheon talks at business representative bodies and educational institutions, as well as participation at international conferences/ seminars/ trade shows.
- Explore new communication strategies and channels that could be usefully employed for greater outreach and impact, such as social media and IT applications.
- Expand and maintain a network of sustainable relationships with key stakeholders who also have a professional interest in promoting competition in the market.
- Ensure that the aims, messaging and outcomes from advocacy and enforcement strategies and activities are consistent and do not conflict with one another.

Given limited resources, the CA must prioritise its advocacy activities, based on various considerations, such as broader regional and national developments; the stage of the competition regime; as well as the availability of human and financial resources.

For AMS that have just introduced a national competition law, advocacy efforts should focus on building awareness among the general public and business community. This includes disseminating information on the benefits of competition law to consumers, and reaching out to businesses on the need to comply with competition law. The creation of an advocacy plan within an overall advocacy strategy could help a CA to:

- Understand the situation;
- Understand the stakeholders, their positions and views;
- Identify target audiences;
- Formulate the right messages and determine the right messenger to deliver those messages;
- Identify processes, opportunities and entry points for advocacy;
- Recognise capacity and gaps/SWOT;
- Set goals and interim outcomes, develop an action plan; and
- Monitor and evaluate results.



In trying to identify the tools for advocacy, the following questions could be addressed during the creation of an advocacy plan:

1) What do we want to achieve with the advocacy activity? (Understand the situation)

Every CA must understand the problems, issues and solutions related to CPL in the respective AMS. Introducing CPL cannot, and will not, bring an immediate change to the way markets work. Therefore, it is useful to identify long-term goals (policy change), medium-term goals (process outcomes) and short-term goals (immediate outputs). This also serves to better assess resource allocation.

2) Who can make it happen? (Understand the stakeholders, their positions and views)

Once the CA set their objectives, it is necessary to understand the people or institutions that need change. This would include formal authorities (such as legislators), and those with capacity to influence (e.g. media, constituencies, influential politicians, key ministries, and agencies covering various issues, including trade and economy, finance, agriculture, defense and education). A useful exercise at this stage is mapping in detail the interests, influence and importance of different stakeholders.

3) What do they need to hear? (Formulating the right messages)

Messages must be persuasive, consistent and easy to understand. As such, they should have two basic components:

- Appeal to what is right;
- Appeal to the audience's self-interest.

It is important to be clear about what stakeholders need and want to hear. Evidence-based messages (e.g. case studies) can help illustrate competition issues in a way that makes it easier for stakeholders to understand and relate.

4) Who do they need to hear it from? (The right messenger to deliver those messages)

The same message can have a different impact if conveyed by different people. A CA must identify the appropriate messengers. As CPL can be technical in nature, legal language should be avoided unless when dealing with a legal audience. Messengers such as the heads of the institution have a very strong impact. Messengers can also come from outside of the CA. It is important to consider trainings or briefings for messengers (e.g. by preparing talking points or practice session} in order to ensure consistent dissemination of messages.

5) How can we make sure they hear it? (Identify processes, opportunities and entry points)

The decision on a suitable approach for advocacy should be based on evaluating advocacy goals, the specific context and messages. This could also involve identifying opportunities in the decision-making process, working with mass media and collaborating with other external partners. It is vital to identify opportunities that have the potential to raise the profile of an issue and exert influence by bringing together supporters (and those who can be convinced to become supporters), as well as decision-makers who can help bring about changes. Networking with officials at both public and private functions provides a good opportunity for this.

6) What do the AMS have and what do they need? (Recognise capacity and gaps/SWOT)

Most of the AMS are in the initial stages of implementing CPL. Advocacy resources are limited, both in terms of human resources and literature/information on CPL. It is therefore necessary to take stock of resources and identify what is needed. Working out alliances with academia and think tanks, both within the AMS and across ASEAN, can help mobilise additional resources for advocacy activities.

7) How to initiate action? (Set goals and interim outcomes; develop an action plan)

In order to take advocacy from planning to action, it is necessary set clear goals and interim outcomes, deciding the type of activities to conduct, as well as allocating a budget. Once all the above preparation is done, these elements come together in the advocacy action plan. Its purpose is to detail all the activities, who will be responsible, timelines, as well as the resources required.

8) How to tell if advocacy efforts are working? (Monitor and evaluate results)

It is important for the CA to review the progress of advocacy efforts on a regular basis, in order to allow for adjustments where necessary. Monitoring and evaluation are key tools to ensure the strategy is working. Some indicators of successful advocacy are improved policies; change in public perception; increased alliances with the CA; as well as a strengthened base of support for the CA.

Every AMS will face a different context and challenge in implementing their CPL. It is therefore important that each AMS develops a clear and concise advocacy plan that sets out the objective of its advocacy; the stakeholders targeted by advocacy activities; as well as the supporting processes and tools. Taking into account the country-specific context, the advocacy objectives should be:

- Suitably selected, economically relevant and politically visible (focusing on a few big issues that really matter, particularly to consumers)
- Affordable, and not resource-intensive (quick wins)
- Realistic and likely to deliver real outcomes and successes

The CA should also be proactive by identifying and addressing at the earliest stage policy issues that are not in alignment with CPL objectives.

IDENTIFYING STRATEGIC ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

CPL aims to ensure a competitive market. The public and private sector form the largest stakeholder groups for advocacy. Effective advocacy can yield significant compliance and deterrence benefits. Moreover, advocacy activities can help CA identify strategic issues and opportunities, and as such, they are important for case prioritisation.

Each CA should consider analysing the complaints about potential anti-competitive conduct that are being filed. Alternatively, data from consumer organisations (including perception surveys) can be used. This will give an indication of the type and volume of distortions in the market, as well as shed light on their possible causes. It could be combined with a broader assessment of the competition situation in the country, notably by looking at market structures and barriers to entry in the regulatory framework. Very often, such an assessment already provides at least "soft evidence" about competition problems for the CA to focus on.

Another option is to conduct more in-depth market studies or sector inquiries. Typically market studies are conducted to examine why particular markets are not working well for businesses and consumers. This involves detailed assessments of the regulatory and economic issues affecting the market concerned. A sound understanding of certain markets is critical before making any policy recommendations, and it can also serve as a starting point to initiate an investigation.

Advocacy and enforcement mutually reinforce each other and should not be considered as independent activities. For a new or developing competition regime, advocacy can take priority over enforcement in the initial stage. It is therefore important for a CA to set a moratorium or grace period after which enforcement will commence. This will give the stakeholders enough time to comply with and understand the implications of the competition law. However, if enforcement does not take place after a period of advocacy initiatives, advocacy then becomes ineffective as it lacks evidence and credibility.

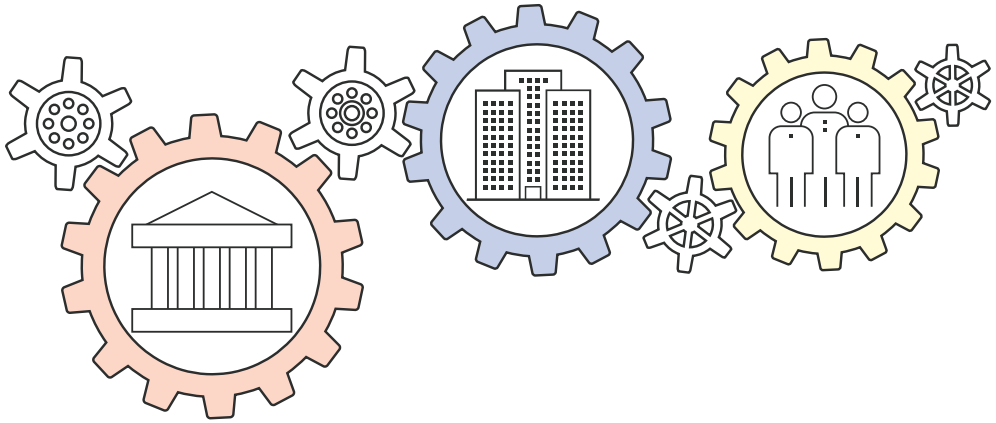
CORE STAKEHOLDER GROUPS

For successful CPL implementation, a CA needs to reach out to and effective engage various stakeholders to build a competition culture. Competition advocacy potentially targets a broad range of stakeholders. The CA in each of the AMS should begin with a stakeholder-mapping exercise in order to identify at the outset who the relevant stakeholders, their concerns and interests are. The CA should then determine channels of access before exploring the most appropriate means to reach them.

CPL requires a holistic, multi-stakeholder approach that engages actors from the public and private sector, as well as civil society. They can be roughly distinguished and structured as follows:

	Specific stakeholder groups (list not meant to be exhaustive)
Public sector	♦ Government and other public authorities ♦ Legislators ♦ Judiciary ♦ Staff of CA
Private sector	♦ Business community (incl. associations and SMEs) ♦ Legal community
Civil society	♦ Consumers ♦ Academia ♦ Media

In the following, the main stakeholders groups and why they matter in the context of competition advocacy are described in more detail.



GOVERNMENT AND OTHER PUBLIC AUTHORITIES

Governments must create competitive and conducive environments that enable the private sector to flourish. Public authorities must ensure their policies are not in conflict with the principles of CPL.

As a stakeholder group, the government comprises numerous ministries, departments and agencies. There is a need to clearly identify and focus on the relevant stakeholders within the public sector. While the CA in most countries is only responsible for enforcing the competition law, the Ministries of Trade have the main mandate for promoting competition policy. They should therefore be prioritised.

At the start of any advocacy activity, a CA should identify the right level of government that should be addressed, i.e. national, state or local level, as well as which department within a public institution should be included in the CA's wider advocacy efforts. Typically, the following government employees should be included in advocacy target groups:

- Public policy advisors and staff
- Tendering, procurement and service contract staff
- Legal advisors
- Audit and compliance staff
- Division heads and managers requesting open market proposals
- Budget managers and financial controllers

Among the public authorities that a CA should pay particular attention to are line ministries, often with larger budgets to fund public services, as well as procurement agencies. Sector regulators, too, are often unaware about competition principles and thus need to be addressed through advocacy activities.

LEGISLATORS

Legislators are responsible for drafting the legislation and regulations that impact society. It is important to consult with legislators and raise their awareness so that they can become champions for CPL.

Legislators write and pass laws. They are usually politicians and often elected by the people of the state. Legislators may be supra-national (e.g. European Parliament), national (e.g. national assemblies or parliaments of individual AMS), or local (e.g. state assemblies or local councils).

Advocacy efforts that serve to engage with parliamentarians need to be timed very carefully. If a draft law or regulation is already presented to the executive or legislature, a CA's recommendation is less likely to be considered or incorporated when compared to a law or regulation which is still in the early drafting stages. Therefore, the earlier in the legislative or regulatory process the legislators are consulted, the more likely it is that competition advocacy will be effective.

JUDICIARY

A judiciary that is familiar with the competition law, including its economic aspects, is critical for the effectiveness of competition law enforcement.

A judiciary familiar with competition law, including its economic aspects, is an important element of a country's competition policy system as it shapes competition policy results, irrespective of the legal tradition and development level[1].

As such, it plays a fundamental role in interpreting and implementing competition rules. Where laws are criminal in nature, there is a direct involvement in that the judiciary is charged with prosecuting competition cases. Moreover, the judiciary is involved in appeal mechanisms. Some laws also allow private rights of action, where an aggrieved party can directly file a competition case in court. Offering an independent review of competition agencies' decisions by the judiciary contributes to a well-functioning competition regime.

In the ASEAN region, CPL is a relatively new subject that is not yet well understood by the broader sections of society, including judges. A lack of familiarity with the concepts of competition law can lead to divergent views between the judges and the CA, to the effect that decisions on competition cases made by a CA can be nullified by the courts.

The CA should therefore address this issue by organising joint seminars or roundtable discussions to strengthen the judiciary. The CA could also periodically send materials on competition issues to judges or the court authorities to keep them in the loop of CPL developments. Formal meetings between the CA and the judges could also be held so that technical details could be explained in face-to-face discussions.

Moreover, each CA should identify and collaborate with institutions or specialised establishments where training is conducted for the judiciary. A basic training course on the principles of competition law and economics could be a good starting point. Gradually, advanced courses could be introduced. Involving experienced judges from other jurisdictions in conducting such briefings or trainings would be ideal as they have first-hand insights into the concerns and challenges faced by the judiciary in the area of CPL.

When it comes to the enforcement of competition rules, some CA do not have the power to conduct dawn raids or search and seize documents or computer records. They need to closely cooperate with the courts and other law enforcement agencies, such as the police or attorney-general, to issue subpoenas. In those jurisdictions, CA would also have to consider involving representatives of the executive branch of government in their advocacy activities, particularly in raising the awareness about procedural provisions of the competition law.

1. International Competition Network, Competition Policy Implementation Working Group: Sub group 3, Competition and the Judiciary

STAFF OF THE CA

All staff of a CA, including the chairperson and commissioners, must share a common understanding about CPL as they need to communicate about the rationale for and benefits of fair competition as part of their daily work.

Last but not least, the staff of CA are expected to enforce the law effectively, undertake competition advocacy, communicate with consumers and other stakeholders and implement activities aimed at promoting competition culture and awareness. It is therefore important to devote attention and resources also to "internal advocacy" within the CA.

A standard manual should be prepared by the CA in each of the AMS, adopting a template approach for consistency, to systematise in-house trainings for their staff. Every new staff recruited by the CA should undergo a certain training programme. This is to ensure that everyone in the agency has the same understanding and application of the principles of the law. In some CA, specific communication manuals or guidelines are in place to ensure that all staff are sufficiently knowledgeable about key stakeholders and related messages.

Additionally, the outcomes of cases that have been investigated and decided by the CA should be used in trainings and explained to staff, as these cases become valuable material with wider advocacy efforts. The same applies to specific market studies and policy advice prepared by the CA.

BUSINESS COMMUNITY

Businesses are the subject of the competition law and therefore need to be sensitised about its provisions in order to be able to adjust their behaviour.

Businesses are expected to compete fairly and avoid anti-competitive behaviour. Individual companies or company representatives, both local and foreign, can be a source of information for the CA, for example by providing tip-offs, and can act as competition champions alongside the CA. Chambers and business associations can help spread the word among their members and have an important multiplying function. The CA could assist businesses by publishing a simple guide for compliance; participating in their events or conferences; or publicising the CA's work in newsletters or reports.

Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) form the "backbone" of most of the ASEAN economies. There are often fears and misconceptions about the introduction of CPL in that it is perceived as a threat to drive SMEs out of the market. The CA should therefore place a particular emphasis on advocating for CPL vis-à-vis SMEs and public authorities and explain why fair competition ultimately also is beneficial for the SME sector.

Some CA may provide guidance to businesses. While this is helpful to raise awareness and promote compliance, those AMS which do not have this particular provision could engage actively with business associations through other means, such as informal meetings, open days, or participation in their functions.

LEGAL COMMUNITY

Competent competition lawyers help develop the law, as well as inform better decision-making by CA and judges. While their role is primarily to advise their clients on to comply with the provisions of the competition law, lawyers can also help identify loopholes in the administrative system.

It is important to engage the wider legal community in competition advocacy in order to ensure that adequate legal advice and representation relating to competition law is available. Lawyers and bar associations play an important role in educating clients on compliance mechanisms; helping the judiciary establish case laws; and ensuring careful enforcement of laws by guarding against carelessness by the CA.

Seminars for lawyers, as well as informal consultations and formal dialogues, are a helpful way to ensure that the principles and application of the competition law are clearly understood. Working with the Bar Association will, firstly, ensure that members of the Bar have a basic understanding of the competition law and, secondly, make sure that they understand the application of the law as the CA understands it. Specialist in-house lawyers and private practitioners represent a valuable resource for competition agencies and could be used as a sounding board for emerging issues relating to (amendments of) the competition law.

CONSUMERS

Consumers benefit from the ultimate aim of competition policy, which is enabling companies to offer lower prices, better quality and a greater choice of products and services. Consumer organisations can also act as agents of change and watchdogs for the CA.

End consumers need to know that, as a result of competition, they are able to choose from a wider range of goods and services of higher quality and at more reasonable prices. Consumers are also change agents as they are able to alter the way businesses operate, as well as prevent or support a regulation that hinders or benefits consumers. It is therefore important for the CA to explain to end consumers how competition law can bring benefits to them. Actual examples and case studies that have impacted prices of consumer goods and services are a useful means foster immediate understanding of the benefits of CPL. The level of understanding of the benefits of competition among consumers, like the SMEs, is likely to be low and weaker; therefore the use of visual description and simple language would be useful in explaining CPL to them.

Moreover, being independent from the government, consumer organisations or action groups can help raise the awareness about competition issues and mobilise consumers' voices on the need for protection against anti-competitive practices, thus exerting pressure on competition and consumer policy reforms. Consumer action groups are often active in policy debates and closely monitor the implementation of laws and regulations to ensure consumer welfare. It is therefore recommended that CA periodically engage consumers in focus group discussions where their views, comments and insights can be taken up for consideration.

ACADEMIA

The academia who study the development of CPL, both in their country and abroad, are an important source of information for the CA and key partner in championing competition reforms.

In general, academia refers to learning institutions: colleges, universities and research institutions, such as think-tanks and policy centres. To create and build a competition culture, the CA should actively engage academic institutions and encourage research on emerging competition and sector-specific issues as well as good practices for CPL implementation. Providing grants to promote research in competition-related areas is a good way of building awareness, as well as creating an interest in this area of law.

Furthermore, the CA could rely on academia for building a body of literature for the CA, by assessing national and international CPL developments and discussions. Academic fora also prove to be an ideal place for practitioners, enforcers and the private sector to interact. Academia should further be encouraged to conduct training courses on CPL, as well as have capacity-building programmes in place for officials. Finally, the CA could work with academia on developing curricula to be integrated into universities.

MEDIA

As the media provides the channel for communication with the general public and helps shape public perception, it can assist in promoting greater awareness about issues related to CPL.

Traditional media includes television, radio, newspapers, magazines and other forms of print media. Amid the rise of digital media and competition heating up in the media space, the traditional media is still very relevant and a strong information-building tool. Newspaper readership is still strong, and a study done by Nielsen from July 2014 to June 2015[2] shows that Malaysia's readership was 57%, Singapore 62% and Thailand 19%. Readers tend to spend more time reading or browsing a newspaper compared with other digital media. This allows for more focus, clarity, continuity and better information gathering. Average readership time is about 17 to 20 minutes, compared to digital media, which has a shorter span.

Media promotes greater public awareness of issues and therefore it is more relevant for a subject matter, such as CPL, to use the traditional media when conveying messages. The traditional media can act as an ally to the CA, provided they are given the right and regular briefings to understand the issues and kept abreast of new developments in CPL. The media can be involved in two ways: firstly, through public policy reporting and secondly, through investigative reporting.

Public policy reporting would involve reporting on the policy, e.g. explanatory reports on the long-term effects of the lack of competition laws on economic growth; the extent of control of monopolistic corporations; the inadequacy of current regulatory framework against cartels; monopolies; making the public understand the impact of deregulation; the impact of monopolies in certain sectors; and exposing the contradictions or conflicts of government rule and regulations.

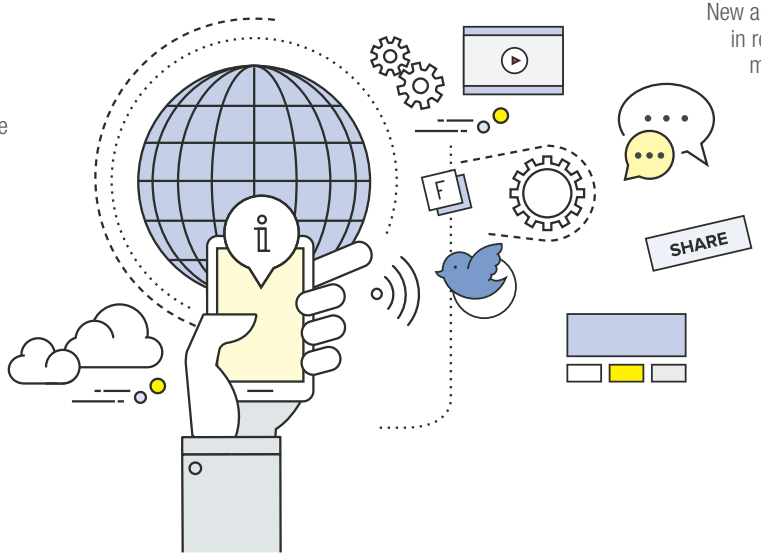
Investigative reporting may not be suitable for CPL, as the CA itself has the mandate to conduct investigations. However, the media could report possible anti-competitive activity or offer constructive criticism on policies or market behavior that may have anti-competitive effects. The spokesperson for the CA then must be prepared to answer questions regarding anti-competitive practices, or follow up questions on investigations being undertaken by the CA. Answers should be candid without revealing confidential information that would jeopardise investigations and the outcome of cases.

For a new CA, the initial implementing years should ideally allocate a large enough budget to advertise the role and functions of the CA to the public through the traditional media. There is a two-pronged approach to tackling advocacy with the media. Firstly, the public should be made aware of the establishment of the new agency. The CA should make itself visible to the public. Therefore periodical advertorials on the agency could be carried out in the mainstream traditional media.

Secondly, the communications unit in the CA should constantly maintain close working relationships with the media. This is to ensure that any press release or press conferences will be well covered by the media. It is always important to keep the media proactively informed of any key investigations being initiated or concluded.

As an initial initiative, the media could include the general media, but eventually the CA must work towards establishing contact with the economic desk. This is to ensure that continued coverage of issues in the CA is picked up and reported.

New and digital media refers to the content available on-demand through the Internet, accessible on any digital device, and usually containing interactive user feedback and creative participation. Examples include websites, online newspapers, blogs, Facebook and other social media. It is grounded on an interactive community. New and digital media have been on the rise in recent years, allowing instant delivery of messages at low costs. The potential for outreach, particularly to target the young generation, is considerable, as is the opportunity to have a two-way communication with the public on issues that affect consumers and businesses.



2. Starbizweek, 24 October 2015

DETERMINING THEMATIC MESSAGES

A CA has several reference points for key thematic messages to be featured in an advocacy strategy. These typically include:

- Regional and overarching national government policies and reform commitments (e.g. free trade agreements, mid-term development plans)
- Individual ministerial policies (regarding private sector, trade and investment promotion)
- Strategy of each CA (e.g. national strategic action plan in line with a ASEAN Competition Action Plan)
- Identified countries for benchmarking
- International and global organisations (e.g. International Competition Network, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, United Nations Conference on Trade and Development)

Each of these reference points comes with a set of data that informs key thematic messages and adds credibility to the message. Using national and global messages not only strengthens advocacy efforts, but also validates them.

Below key thematic messages can be applied and adjusted for use in specific advocacy activities of CA in ASEAN:

Fair business competition:

- Creates better deals for customers
- Promotes national and regional economic growth
- Creates an environment that supports SME development
- Attracts investment and innovation
- Promotes a transparent regulatory environment
- Creates better value for public services

BUILDING A CASE FOR COMPETITION

When approaching a stakeholder, the CA must ensure that sufficient research has been completed on the subject matter to be discussed and accurate and up-to-date information is available. For example, if the procurement division of a Ministry is being approached regarding bid rigging in a particular area, data should be collected in order to substantiate the discussion or briefing. This also serves to strengthen the credibility of the CA.

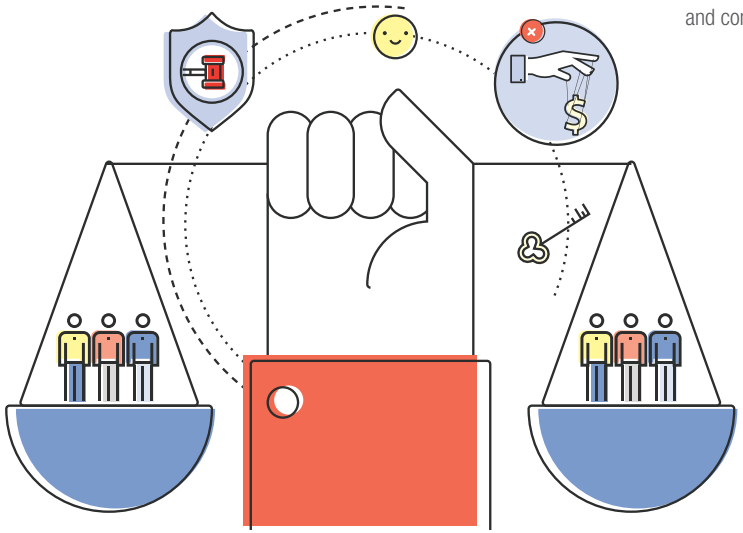
Messages must be specifically tailored to different stakeholders. Generic thematic messages may not work well in some instances, for example when dealing with SMEs. Here, it would be useful to explain how the competition law specifically helps promote and protect SMEs. The language used should also be carefully considered. Briefings or seminars that heavily use legal and technical language are not accepted well by most stakeholders. Simple, concise use of the English language or a national language can have a better effect.

As different stakeholders react differently to competition issues, it is vital to choose the right tools when addressing them. For example, when dealing with procurement officers, it is best to arrange for a direct, face-to-face meeting, but when dealing with association members, it may be better to organise a seminar or workshop to reach out to a larger audience. In any case, follow-up meetings or workshops should be conducted to avoid loss of the momentum of discussion and interest.

LOCALISING THEMATIC MESSAGES

For advocacy vis-à-vis national stakeholders, each AMS must take into consideration the socio-political, economic situation of their country. For example, it may be sensitive to some stakeholders to advocate breaking up monopolies, particularly those owned or controlled by the government. It is therefore imperative for CA to contextualise or localise their messages. For example, in almost all of the AMS, SMEs form a major part of business, so it may not be appropriate to advocate to them about competition and economic growth. Instead, CAs can advocate to SMEs how the law could be used to their advantage, by using it as a sword to inform the CA of any anti-competitive practices of businesses, or as a shield to protect themselves against exploitative market power. Similarly, in many of the AMS, state-owned enterprises (SOEs) are very dominant. The justification for the existence of an SOE must be clearly understood before advocacy activities are planned to address them. Under the principle of competitive neutrality, no advantages shall be accorded to an SOE simply on the grounds of being state-owned or controlled.

Finally, the benefits of being competitive and able to enter the markets of other AMS should also be advocated, particularly within the context of regional economic integration. Policies that protect the local economy are prevalent in almost all AMS. These policies must be respected, and advocacy activities carefully prepared when addressing them. Again, research and consultations with relevant agencies can help gain a better and clearer understanding of said policies. If they are anti-competitive in nature, a CA should try and educate policy makers accordingly, seeking to bring about changes that are ultimately beneficial for the country's economy and consumers.



BUILDING A MESSAGE FRAMEWORK

A message framework is the single most important reference point and internal planning tool for all advocacy activities. It provides the CA with clear, concise and consistent guidance on what either to talk or write about when promoting and advocating for CPL. The message framework relates key thematic messages to different advocacy objectives and stakeholder groups.

In the case of CPL in ASEAN, the following agreed objectives lead the way for a CA to develop its message framework:

- To communicate ***importance*** and ***benefits*** of competition law and policy to businesses / consumers / governments in the ASEAN member states.
- To deliver the above message in a manner that is ***accurate*** and accessible to all stakeholders.
- To emphasise the ***regional*** significance to competition law and policy to the ***ASEAN Economic Community***.

Expanding this into a comprehensive a message framework that a CA can use on a day-to-day basis is essential to provide compelling, persuasive and professional advocacy tools and activities. As such, it comprises accurate and accessible information for CA to tap on.

Consistency of message is paramount and, when used correctly, a well-researched and reviewed message framework with senior-level endorsement will deliver results. This, in turn, increases the effectiveness and impact in creating a competition culture both within an AMS and throughout the region.

A message framework is a strategic document and should be revisited in line with a wider strategic review process of a CA. It can be different in style and content for each CA. However, there are a number of essential components for drafting and signing off a message framework, such as:

- Overarching key thematic messages on the general benefits of competition
- Supporting facts and figures (e.g. laws, case studies, enforcement statistics)
- Alignment with wider government policy, i.e. how CPL fits in the national development and reform agenda of a country
- Findings from studies or reviews by technical experts
- Approval and endorsement of leadership

An example of an initial generic key message framework can be found in the Annex. Another useful reference for building a message framework can be seen from the work of the Advocacy Working Group under the ICN and the recently launched "Benefits Platform", a web-based toolbox that seeks to provide knowledge, strategies and arguments to be used for competition advocacy purposes (http://www.internationalcompetitionnetwork.org/working-groups/current/advocacy/benefits.aspx).

ALIGNMENT OF MESSAGES TO STAKEHOLDERS

Once the key thematic messages have been both identified and agreed upon, a CA should determine which messages are most appropriate for each stakeholder group. The alignment and prioritisation of messages and more detailed talking points can be done by combining the stakeholder mapping with the matrix for the message framework, as follows:

Key thematic message	
Creates better deals for customers	
Specific benefits	
♦ Increases consumer choice ♦ Increases quality of products and services	♦ Lowers prices ♦ Increases innovation ♦ Stimulates consumer spending
Frequently asked questions (FAQs)	
Question	**Answer**
How does competition create better deals?	Competition offers deals that improve quality and innovation and lower prices.
Why is competition good for consumers?	Competition provides consumers with enhanced choice, better quality and lower prices.
How does competition affect prices?	Competition creates intense pricing improvements amongst traders and suppliers to secure customers.
What impact does competition have on the quality of products and services offered?	Increased market participants and innovation drives improved quality, products and services
Supporting facts and figures	
To be supplemented (varies in each AMS)	

An additional column can be inserted for the stakeholder groups to whom the specific key message may be most relevant. Despite the differences of competition regimes across ASEAN, an underlying consistent theme across all AMS is create a common competition culture across the region.

Using the message framework as a reference point, the following tools are commonly used in advocacy when disseminating information to different stakeholder groups:

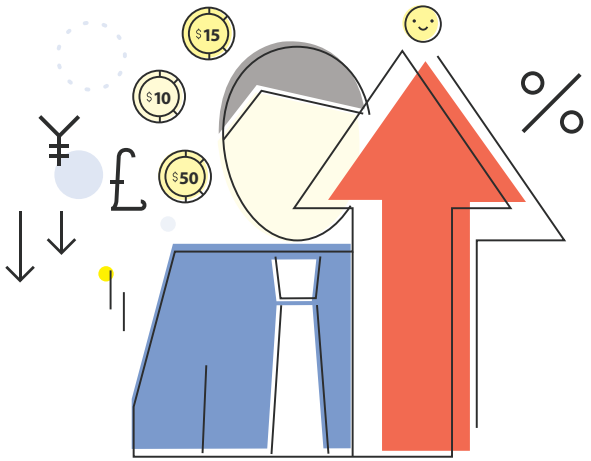
- Key messages
- Talking points
- FAQs

KEY MESSAGES

A key message document is the most commonly used tool for advocacy work. As an expanded version of the key thematic messages, it is more succinct and provides focused guidance on what a CPL advocate can say or write. Key messages can be broken up by theme or activity and can take into account current events or news that have an impact or implications on advocacy activities. For example, if a CA is running a specific advocacy activity that addresses anti-competitive behaviour following a high-profile case, key messages can be customised and edited. As such, key messages need to be reviewed periodically, in order to ensure that they remain current, credible and will have the desired impact.

Below is an example of how the key message on the benefits of competition for consumers can be further differentiated:

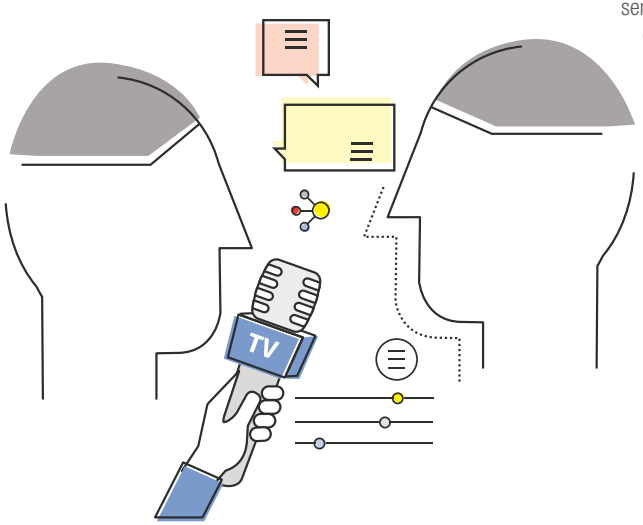
Key thematic message	Creates better deals for customers
Message objective	To increase consumer confidence and empowerment
Key benefits	♦ Increases consumer choice ♦ Increases quality of products and services ♦ Lowers prices ♦ Increases innovation ♦ Stimulates consumer spending
High-level statement or testimonial	"Competition in XX [insert country] provides consumers with greater choice, better quality and competitive prices"
Supporting statements	E.g. Competition in the marketplace empowers consumers to make well-informed decisions according to their needs and budget.
FAQs	E.g. to be derived from stakeholder consultations.
Case studies	To be added, drawing on the enforcement and advocacy record of each CA or external sources.



TALKING POINTS

Talking points are usually for more high-profile advocacy activities for a specific event or activity where a representative from a CA is speaking. Typically, this could be a panel session at a conference or forum, or a media interview. Talking points differ from key messages in that they place greater emphasis and guidance on which key messages should be used, as well as the context, tone and posture of how the message should be delivered.

If, for example, an advocate from a CA is part of a panel session at a conference on enforcement issues facing the judiciary, talking points can be prepared that cover the sensitivities. Talking points could also emphasise the political priority attached to creating a competition culture to advance economic prosperity within the context of the ASEAN Economic Community. Talking points essentially help direct key messages to specific occasions and are thus developed on a case-by-case basis.



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQS)

FAQs support key messages with information that is generally factual and straightforward to answer. It is usually an expansion or updated extract from those that are included in the key message framework. A well-researched FAQ will have facts, figures, statistics, policies and case studies that support building a case for competition.

FAQs also provide anyone involved in advocacy activities with quick and easy information that can be fed into presentations, speeches and press releases. FAQs can also be specially prepared for press packs, either standard or tailor-made for a specific occasion.

TIMING

When developing an advocacy strategy, it is important to consider the timing of the planned activity. There are a number of factors that can have a potential impact on the successful delivery of advocacy activities. Each of these should be considered during the planning process:

Factors	Notes
Availability of resources:	A CA should ensure human and financial resources are available and approved for each planned activity, particularly higher profile advocacy. For example, if a CA is planning a conference or forum, the proposal should be budgeted and signed off, along with an outline agreement from keynote speakers, etc.
Preferences of stakeholder groups:	A CA should conduct research within each stakeholder group to determine how and when they prefer to communicate and interact. For example, if a CA is planning internal advocacy activities, they should be scheduled to when all staff are available. Conducting an awareness session during a lunch hour is not likely to have as much of an impact as slotting it in during a regular monthly departmental training or meeting.
Wider government announcements and concerns:	Co-ordination with other government activity, where possible, should also be considered. For example, if a CA is planning a headline-grabbing event, this could be made part of a broader government event or announcement. The participation in other government activities could be also effective to promote the CA's key messages.

SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS

ASEAN is a culturally, politically and economically diverse region. Each AMS will have special considerations when planning its advocacy activities, and each consideration will have its own sensitivities. These could relate to:

- Political or regime changes
- National, regional and global economic conditions
- Pre-existing regional arrangements
- International relations, specifically with a key ally
- Ongoing issues and events impacting any of the key thematic messages
- Specific barriers to change

It is important to account for these considerations and the potential impact they can have on advocacy activities. It is then vital to assess whether given these considerations, written or verbal communication works better, and then to accommodate this in the advocacy planning process accordingly.

IDENTIFYING CHAMPIONS, SPOKESPERSONS AND AMBASSADORS

CHOOSING THE RIGHT ADVOCACY LEAD

A major success factor of an advocacy campaign is who leads it and delivers the messages. Identifying the right public figure for an advocacy activity can ensure that the messages are received, understood and have the desired impact.

Terminology when referring to those publicly leading advocacy efforts should be consistent. A champion is generally an individual who leads internal activities while an ambassador leads external activities. A spokesperson is authorised to speak to the media about CPL and is generally the public face of an advocacy campaign and/or a CA.

There are a number of key considerations in identifying the right champion, ambassador or spokesperson. A combination of qualities and experience that are highly desirable includes:

- Respected track record, with solid technical expertise
- Credible in the community and/or stakeholder groups targeted
- Skilled at building trust and relationships
- Confident and calm under pressure
- Public-speaking experience
- Endorsement from leadership

Once identified, preparing CPL champions, ambassadors and spokespersons is the last element in planning advocacy activities.

PREPARING CHAMPIONS, AMBASSADORS AND SPOKESPERSONS

Ensuring champions, ambassadors and spokespersons fully understand the advocacy activities, their intent and contribution to wider government policy is essential for effective delivery. They need to understand the bigger picture and what their role is in achieving the campaign objectives. A session to help champions, ambassadors and spokespersons keep on message during speeches, presentations and other public speaking events will support them in confidently delivering the necessary key messages. Internally, a CA could consider public-speaking trainings for those tasked with advocacy activities.

It is further recommended that a media training be given to competition advocates. Media activity and press coverage is both sought and achieved at significant events and announcements during an advocacy activity. Professionally prepared spokespersons will help ensure the coverage is both polished and professional. As with presentation training, media training will also give the individuals more confidence.

To provide ongoing support and to maintain momentum, a CA should consider assigning a dedicated member of their communications team to support campaign champions, ambassadors and spokespersons. Dedicated communications support will facilitate up-to-date messages and tools, administer speaking opportunities and manage media activity. It will also allow champions, ambassadors and spokespersons to focus on delivery of message, rather than its production.

SECTION 2:
IMPLEMENTING ADVOCACY ACTIVITIES

This section outlines a "how to" approach and which tools to be considered to when conducting a CPL advocacy campaign or individual activity. It also provides a detailed description of different communication channels for advocacy and explains for which occasion or stakeholder group they are best suited.

CAMPAIGN DEVELOPMENT

A clear campaign plan to execute advocacy activities is key to its success. A CA should carefully consider and plan all advocacy activities under a campaign umbrella. This not only ensures consistency of message, but also provides the CA with a robust and measureable mandate to engage in advocacy. Advocacy campaigns typically comprise the following components:

CAMPAIGN BRIEF

A campaign brief should start with a *short description of the challenge, issue or opportunity* that needs to be communicated. This could be, among others, a problematic policy or enforcement issue, or distortion of the market in some sectors.

CAMPAIGN OBJECTIVES

The campaign objectives must state what the desired outcomes are. The objective is directly aligned to what influence and behavioural change is required in any advocacy campaign, so a previous *stakeholder mapping and analysis is critical to setting objectives*. The more focused the campaign objective, the greater is the likelihood of success.

EXAMPLE FOR CAMPAIGN **OBJECTIVES**

To foster competition compliance among four key stakeholder groups (government, judges, consumers and businesses), specifically in order to:

To foster competition compliance among four key stakeholder groups (government, judges, consumers and businesses), specifically in order to:

- Introduce pro-competitive policies
- Encourage transparency and pro-competitive behaviour
- Reinforce the benefits of eliminating anti-competitive restrictions
- Ensure the judiciary understand and are fully equipped to support enforcement actions

CAMPAIGN STRATEGY

The campaign strategy sets out how the campaign objectives will be achieved by identifying specific advocacy activities. This is a combination of tools or methods to be applied, the identified stakeholders and the *relevant key messages* to be used.

EXAMPLE FOR CAMPAIGN **STRATEGY**

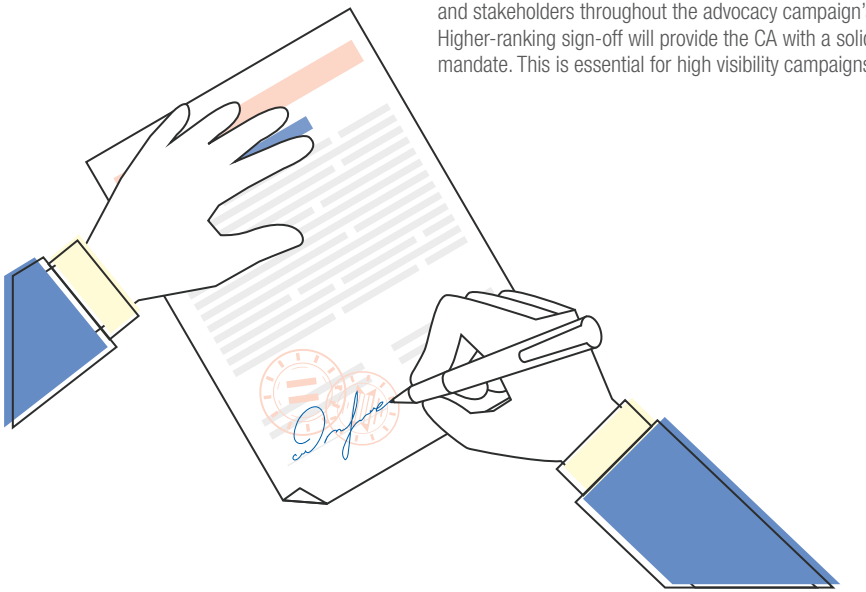
To design and implement a national campaign, in line with ASEAN and other AMS initiatives, that heightens the awareness and understanding of CPL, its applicatiozn and enforcement, as well as its wider benefits and impact on economic development.

Specific actions targeted at selected stakeholders

- **Judiciary:** To develop a critical mass of understanding and technical preparedness within the judiciary, e.g. through specialist briefings and roundtable discussions.
- **Businesses:** To ensure all businesses are aware of CPL and encourage a self-compliant competition culture, e.g. through seminars and compliance guidelines.
- **Consumers:** To raise awareness of CPL and its benefits with consumers and to engage with consumer groups to give them a sense of "ownership" identifying anti-competitive behavior, e.g. through media campaigns and roadshows.

SIGN-OFF

Securing sign-off is important as it provides the CA with the mandate to conduct advocacy activities and to work with approved messages and stakeholders throughout the advocacy campaign's lifetime. Higher-ranking sign-off will provide the CA with a solid and robust mandate. This is essential for high visibility campaigns.



TIMELINE

When setting a timeline for any advocacy campaign, consideration should be given to the campaign approval process, as well as identifying and securing the availability of lead departments, CPL champions and technical experts. Setting a campaign timeline should also include a mid-campaign review to evaluate its impact and whether it is meeting its objectives. Close reference should also be made to the special considerations highlighted in connection with the overarching advocacy strategy.

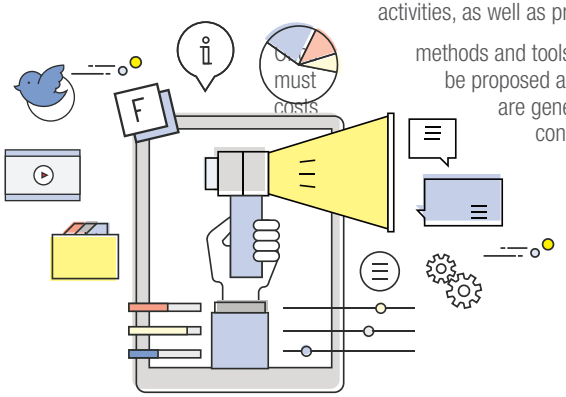
The timeline of a campaign should also include short, medium and long-term milestones. During the initial phases of a campaign, a series of quick wins can serve to make an immediate impact. Examples of such quick wins include:

- Press conference and campaign launch
- Follow-up interviews with spokespersons
- Placed articles, features, opinion editorials and advertorials
- Keynote conference or seminar speeches by technical experts or spokespersons
- Social media activity (when appropriate)

A timeline with a strong kick-off, quick wins and identified milestones will give a campaign both substance and clear measureable actions that can be used in evaluating its impact.

METHODOLOGIES

Identifying and preparing the correct tools and methods to be used can have a significant impact on the success of advocacy campaigns. Typically, advocacy campaigns will be supported by a combination of digital activity (e.g. websites and social media), high-profile endorsement, direct outreach to identified groups, technical trainings, internal and inter-ministerial communication, public information activities, as well as press and media coverage.



methods and tools have been identified, the necessary resources be proposed as the campaign budget. Staff and administration are generally absorbed, but additional resources must considered for website development, media engagement, technical trainings and workshops, public information activities, and associated costs.

ONE-TO-ONE

One-to-one activity happens all the time in daily business, either planned or opportunistic. A CA can identify these opportunities either before or during a one-to-one encounter and use them to advocate the benefits of CPL. Advocacy is a continuous process, rather than a single, planned event. Every opportunity should therefore be leveraged and any outputs and follow-up action recorded and passed on to the relevant lead. Typical one-to-one advocacy methods include:

One-to-one activity	Notes
Maintaining active networks:	This entails regular contact with established networks and key stakeholders to exchange updates, CPL experiences and general progress. Networks are arguably the most effective form of advocacy as it keeps CPL "front of mind" and is pivotal in creating as well as maintaining a competition culture.
Providing an advisory service to key stakeholders:	This is particularly important during a period of transition or legislative implementation. Assisting someone is the easiest way to establish trust and an ongoing, effective business relationship.
Formal meetings:	These are more prescriptive, yet constitute an important method of one-to-one advocacy. Key to the success of more formal meetings is taking minutes of all discussions and following through with agreed actions.

CONFERENCES AND FORA

Conferences and fora are an efficient way of reaching out to stakeholders and advocating CPL. These platforms can provide opportunities for professional networking and development, and often allow for getting updates on CPL developments.

A CA should consider organising a conference or forum to elevate the importance of CPL within each AMS. Taking a lead in a key area of economic development can position a CA as a progressive and active agency that is making a difference. Choosing an engaging and relevant theme for a conference is essential to garner support and mobilise resources. This can also be used in the context of wider government policies. It is similarly crucial for the success of conferences and fora to engage reputable speakers to convey key messages.

Conferences and fora also allow CAs and their implementation partners to influence targeted stakeholder groups. There are several ways this can be done, for example:

- Inter-agency workshops to raise the awareness about different roles and responsibilities regarding CPL
- Regional conferences to share experiences and good practices of other CA
- Business fora focusing on SMEs
- Conferences with the legal profession on technical issues

The higher the endorsement and participation a CA can achieve with a conference or forum, the greater the number of attendees the event will attract. Aside from providing a platform for a CA to advocate for CPL, a conference or forum also has other benefits that will extend well beyond the event duration, including:

- Elevates and creates a competition culture and reinforces the benefits of competition to those implementing and enforcing CPL
- Significantly increases the stakeholder database of a CA, leading to other advocacy efforts, such as follow-up advisory or training
- Builds a CPL community of practice

SPEAKER OPPORTUNITIES

Conferences are generally gatherings of a particular community to showcase industry or sector progress and initiatives. They provide a good opportunity to influence stakeholders. Organisers need credible and interesting keynote speakers and panelists. A CA can research national and regional events where CPL is relevant to the agenda and offer a technical expert as a resource person. International conferences offer more opportunities to share experiences and practices, and often speakers talking about a case study could be of particular interest.

TOP TIPS FOR PROPOSING KEYNOTE SPEAKERS:

- The speaker should be a sound subject matter expert, technically knowledgeable and a confident presenter.
- The presentation and/or speech with specific messages must be prepared in advance (including key messages and desired outcomes relevant to the conference attendees).
- Some support could be given to the speaker during drafting and rehearsing of their speech.
- The format needs to be agreed with the conference organisers (e.g. full speech or panel discussion, talking points, word prompts), along with how the speech will be visually supported (e.g. power point, DVD).
- Finally, it is vital to discuss and agree with the conference organisers on any press activity at the conference; and whether written materials will be made available for event participants and press packs.

TOP TIPS FOR MEMORABLE PRESENTATIONS:

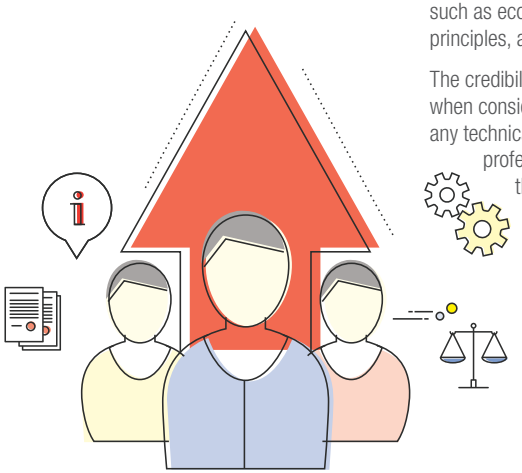
- Allow on average two minutes for each slide. For example, a presentation of 20 minutes should have no more than 10 slides.
- Use branded slide templates wherever possible to reinforce the CA identity. If there is no branded template, clean and simple slide backgrounds work best.
- The font style used should be the CA house style and consistent throughout.
- The font size used throughout must me legible from the back of the presentation room. Titles should be in larger font.
- The font colour should be easily read – avoid colour on colour. Black on green, and red on blue are particularly bad.
- Keep the amount of text to a minimum – the audience must focus on what the presenter is saying, not reading the slides.
- Use (info) graphics to illustrate complex concepts and issues. This works well with multiple language audiences.
- Use photographs and screen grabs of relevant websites to reinforce points and bring colour to slides.
- Use multimedia clips mid-way through a presentation to retain the audience's attention. Media clips may be news items, public information tools or a subject that is directly relevant to the presentation.
- When using any third party materials, such as photographs, graphics, infographics and multi-media clips, ensure there are no copyright issues.
- Always give credit to the source of any third party materials used.

TOP TIPS FOR MEMORABLE AND INFLUENTIAL SPEECHES:

- Start with an anecdote – this gets the attention of the audience and helps to build a rapport.
- Include key messages within the first few minutes.
- Generally a message needs to be repeated five to seven times before it is remembered. Repeat messages where necessary – find different ways to articulate the same thing.
- Messages can also be reinforced through case studies and attributable sources, such as research papers.
- Audience concentration often wanes between eight and fifteen minutes. To maintain attention, speeches can be punctuated with multimedia clips or through audience engagement, such as asking a rhetorical question.
- Question-and-answer sessions are more effective at the end of a speech, and are easier to control. Acknowledge those asking the question by brief contact, note down the question, then answer the question maintaining eye contact.
- In presentations, ensure the text can be read at the back of the room. Allocate one to two minutes per slide, allowing the audience to read it. If a multi-lingual audience, keep text to a minimum – use images and graphics instead.
- Ensure familiarity and comfort with the technology in use. Conduct a sound check, including voice levels at back of room.
- Discuss event and speech format and keep to time.

TECHNICAL TRAININGS

Training is essential in any organisation, and using technical training to advocate the benefits of competition law is an area where a CA could achieve early and rapid results externally. When considering a technical training programme as part of wider advocacy efforts, a CA should consider partnering with an academic institution and offer guest lectures to legal trainees or judges undergoing continuous professional training.



There is a cost to both the CA delivering and the stakeholders receiving any training, so this advocacy opportunity should be carefully planned and offered to the most relevant stakeholders. In the case of the judiciary, technical training on the principles, substance and procedures of competition law are of tangible and immediate use to the trainees. Other useful topics include issues such as economic analysis, investigative tools, due process principles, and rules on evidence.

The credibility and reputation of the trainer is also important when considering a technical training programme. When conducting any technical training, ensure that your trainer is from the same profession or area of expertise as the trainees attending the session. For example, technical training for the judiciary should be conducted by other judges, i.e. more experienced judges from the same or another jurisdiction. As such, stakeholder engagement should include regular contact and engagement with suitable experts who are willing to undertake technical training on the behalf of a CA.

CHAMPION OUTREACH

Academics, opinion formers and industry leaders are stakeholders who take a lead in researching and developing published work in areas with which they directly work. This is conducted generally to improve practice, introduce new ideas, and identify trends or strengths and weaknesses. A CA should research which stakeholders have a special interest in CPL in ASEAN, then consider engaging with them face to face to brief and inform them about advocacy efforts.

Academics:	Academics in the fields of economics, law, business management and international affairs are all stakeholders in CPL. A CA should consider them as part of their advocacy efforts as they are credible, informed and influential individuals who can play a pivotal role in promoting CPL. The acknowledgement, endorsement and recognition of a well-respected academic can provide significant validation and approval for the advocacy undertaken by a CA.
Researchers:	Many researchers are future leaders in their field, so a CA should consider them as important stakeholders. This group includes PhD students, think tank researchers and fellows, trade/investment promotion organisations and consumer action groups. The findings of research can make a credible impact on the advocacy efforts of a CA.
Opinion formers:	An opinion former is the most diverse and varied stakeholder group. In general, an opinion former is anyone who helps shape public opinion and behaviour. In the CPL context, an opinion former can be a recognized technical expert, policy advisor (domestic and foreign), newspaper columnist or broadcast commentator. This group can also comprise academics and researchers.

TRADITIONAL MEDIA

Traditional media is defined as print and broadcast media (i.e. newspapers, specialist publications, magazines, TV and radio). In the early stages of an advocacy campaign, AMS should consider a special round-table background briefing with selected editors. The objective of this is three-fold:

- To elevate CPL in the news agenda
- To explain the law and its implementation, policy directions etc.
- To ensure the editors understand the importance of CPL in the context of their readers/audience and can give subsequent press releases due prominence

It is important to ensure those attending understand it is a background briefing and not a press conference. The difference is they can use the information given for context in the future, but the briefing is not reported as such. Often editors' background briefings are held over breakfast or lunch and the briefing is given by a high-level official or the campaign spokesperson.

Throughout the campaign, advocacy efforts can be reported in the media either proactively (announced in advance) or reactively (reported as a result of unplanned media contact). The preferred method is proactively as information can be considered, prepared and approved before being reported. This can be done as follows:

Activity	Description	Purpose
Press releases	A communiqué for distribution to media editors and journalists.	To announce routine news, events, announcements.
Press conference	A very public event with a high-level dignitary to which all media are invited. Usually held at special venues and requiring considerable advance planning.	To announce significant or newsworthy items for which sizeable coverage is the desired outcome.
Press briefings	A less pressured, more productive opportunity for the press to get detailed information. Normally held in an informal setting. Every broadcaster should be offered a one-to-one interview as part of the invitation. (Personal interviews are always given more time on-air than press conference footage).	Press briefings provide official presentations to all interested media and are most commonly used for technical or detailed news stories. One-on-one interviews are arranged for after the briefing. This is ideal for CPL activity as it enables a CA to target specialist members of the media.
Press points	Smaller, informal, unplanned "mini press conference" held after a meeting or event involving a significant official. Common when something newsworthy has either happened or been agreed.	A press point should be held in an accessible place, usually outside a building, or an area where the meeting or event has taken place. It is a quick and easy way to get an important or unplanned message out, but requires the support of a press officer.
Interviews	One-to-one interviews with targeted members of the media	Interviews with the print and broadcast media are used in a number of ways and can be offered to journalists at any time to suit the advocacy campaign agenda. It is recommended that interview bids and appointments are managed by members of an organisational press office, and a pre-briefing is essential.

TOP TIPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL PRESS CONFERENCE:

- Provide a good visual backdrop illustrating the issues/event and organisational branding.
- Provide a comprehensive press pack (further guidance below).
- Reserve seats at the front for photographers.
- Provide an interview room with an appropriately branded backdrop for TV interviews.
- Provide parking nearby for broadcasting vans.
- Provide a broadcast-quality voice-reinforcement system, with distribution amplifier facilities for broadcasters.
- Provide a raised platform or stage at rear of conference room for TV camera crews.
- Ensure installed TV lighting to avoid crews cluttering up the room with their own lights.
- Provide a lectern with branding for the opening statement.
- Provide a computer-driven presentation (for example PowerPoint) to highlight main themes and the supporting IT equipment to present it.
- Provide an ISDN line and associated equipment for radio journalists and for handling regional radio interviews and coverage of zone activity.
- Provide electronic copies of graphs or tables presented.
- Ensure a pre-conference briefing of main media is held with the main speakers.
- Press conferences should be tailored regionally.
- Ensure there is access for disabled people and journalists.
- Record the event and transcribe for internal communications use.

PRESS PACKS

Throughout the duration of an advocacy campaign, a CA should have a specialist press or informational pack to give to journalists, and, indeed, to significant stakeholders who comment in the media. Press packs (or kits) are easy to manage and update, providing journalists with additional information beyond what is captured at interviews. The following components are essential:

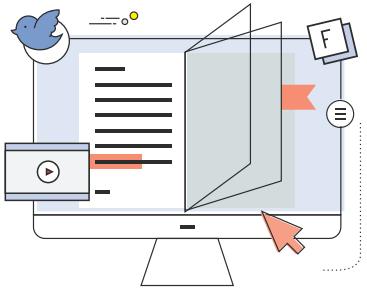
- A press or news release in the national language of the respective AMS, and English (when appropriate)
- Background material, such as FAQs
- CV of relevant individual, for example conference speaker or CA representative
- A copy of any associated publications
- Graphical and/or tabular material in hard and soft copy
- Notepad and pen
- Any other giveaways (e.g. flash drive)
- Details of social media accounts and online sources of information

Before approaching any members of the press, a CA must consider and adhere to existing organisational policies and procedures when planning or conducting media activity. Within any organisation, contact with traditional media is usually managed through a press office or communications department and underpinned by **organisational media policy**.

This sets out who can speak to the media and typically includes communication and press officers, appointed spokespersons, technical experts and organisational leadership, such as the chair or CEO of a CA.

DIGITAL AND SOCIAL MEDIA ACTIVITY

Digital media is defined as text, graphics, photographs, audio or video that is generated and disseminated digitally. Since the advent of the Internet and smartphones, digital media is one of the fastest-growing areas of technology. Digital media provides content creators with an ever-increasing array of apps and platforms with which to communicate. The biggest advantage of using digital media is that it enables organisations and individuals to target relevant audiences quickly, creatively and effectively, as well as ensure integrity of a brand and/or message.



Social media provides outlets to publish and disseminate digital media, e.g. YouTube for video, Twitter for news, LinkedIn for professional publications and events. Social media platforms, such as Facebook, are more relevant for the general public or consumer groups.

A CA should consider using digital and social media as part of its advocacy efforts as they have the potential for extensive outreach and impact. Everyone has access to information in the palm of their hand, so using digital and social media to reach targeted stakeholders is essential to any advocacy campaign. For example, a CA could make use of short videos or animations that highlight the benefits of competition for certain stakeholder groups. Moreover, a hashtag (#) campaign to accompany a conference or forum could be used to allow conference attendees to tweet their views during a panel session or debate.

INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS

The most effective and relevant advocates of CPL are the staff of CA. They make a significant impact on heightening awareness of CPL and in generating a wider competition culture.

his capacity to influence should be supported and developed internally as it underpins external advocacy efforts.

Internal communications programmes and employee engagement can be part of either a specific campaign or embedded within the organisational culture. Committed employee engagement and regular, informative internal communications will reinforce an internal competition culture. This will naturally resonate externally during day-to-day levels of wider external engagement, thus achieving greater impact.

A CA should choose the right internal communications tools and methods relevant to their chosen government stakeholders, organisational culture, political landscape and resources available. Face-to-face is the most preferred and trusted method of internal communications. Each organisation will have its own methods of communicating with staff; however, a CA may wish to review and evaluate current practices and consider the following:

- Format
- Frequency
- Message
- Interactivity/two-way process
- Follow-up

The following contains an overview of what a CA can do enhance internal communications in the context of advocacy:

Staff, departmental and inter-departmental meetings:	This provides an opportunity for staff briefings, particularly to share updates on cases and other important CPL developments.
Meeting with leadership:	Leadership is considered by staff to be the most trusted and credible source of information. Generally, the more senior the leader, the greater the impact of the advocacy activity with which they are involved. Engagement with CEOs and chairpersons, for example, will have far-reaching outcomes. A CA should consider using this method of internal communications to announce or share milestones, successes or challenges in CPL.
Engagement and awareness sessions:	These are suited to communicate with associated departments and other public authorities that are part of wider advocacy efforts for CPL. Popular "quick hits" are pop-up stands in department lobbies, staff restaurants and other areas where staff socialise. This activity is best supported with accompanying materials, such as leaflets, a plasma presentation and small giveaways, e.g. pens with the CA website address.
Staff training:	This is vital to supporting competition advocacy. A CA should regularly engage with department heads and staff to introduce or reinforce developments in internal processes and procedures.
Dedicated, informal, internal inter-departmental networking events:	Such events for CA staff are a very easy way to promote and reinforce a competition culture. A set day in the week, such as a working breakfast or coffee on Fridays, is also useful for staff to interact and exchange their workload or cases they are working on.

Reward and recognition schemes:	Reward and recognition schemes are an effective way to engage staff fully in wider advocacy efforts. Such schemes enable staff to take ownership of CPL by recognising their contribution and the value it adds to implementation of and compliance with competition rules. Reward schemes involve a tangible benefit to an employee who is responsible for an idea, proposal, initiative or result that demonstrates: ♦ Enhanced or improved procedure or process ♦ Financial saving to the organisation ♦ New or creative idea, e.g. for a campaign Rewards are typically vouchers for local treats or experiences, or a prize that money cannot buy.
Recognition schemes:	This are intended to acknowledge staff contributions. Typically, this is for good customer service, successful outcomes of case investigation, a contribution towards a special event or project, or helping a colleague. The most common recognition scheme is Employee of the Month.
Team-building and staff development:	Raising awareness outside of a CA can significantly enhance the effectiveness of CPL compliance. Greater awareness correlates with greater compliance as employees are trained to be aware of what is not competitive practice and to know what to do in reporting it to the correct authorities. A CA should endeavor to use every available opportunity to include CPL in staff trainings across relevant government departments, particularly those that regularly procure goods and services from the open market.
Printed materials:	CA should consider publishing standards when producing the following: ♦ Internal newsletters dedicated to CPL developments ♦ Placement of articles covering CPL-related developments in specialist publications ♦ Notice boards to disseminate updates (to be placed in common areas where staff tends to congregate) ♦ Letters and memos for official and instructional notifications All printed materials should also be made available as soft copies on the internet and/or intranet of a CA.
Digital communications:	Technology has significantly increased the capacity and means to communicate and engage with employees. The preferred method of communications will vary within the AMS and their respective digital capacity and accessibility. The popularity of and propensity towards using mobile and smartphones as the first source of information should considered in planning advocacy activities. Furthermore, the following channels are available: ♦ Intranet (internal website) to comprise a library or central repository of information and publications; features for e-learning; updates on CA announcements and events; internal discussion or chat platforms (informal) ♦ Plasma screens to display updates in public spaces, e.g. in reception areas so visitors can see the messages as well (modern notice boards) ♦ Podcasts for senior management and trainers to get their message across in a time- and cost-effective, as well as consistent manner ♦ Group text messages to notify or remind staff of an event, advocacy activity or other news

PUBLIC INFORMATION

Public information (or education) campaigns are a valued and essential component part of wider advocacy efforts. Typical and popular public information tools include:

- ♦ Printed materials (e.g. leaflets, giveaways)
- ♦ Broadcast (e.g. radio and TV ads)
- ♦ Billboards
- ♦ Social media campaigns
- ♦ Pop-up shops / desks in malls
- ♦ Public meetings

TOP TIPS FOR PUBLIC INFORMATION CAMPAIGNS

- ♠ Provide the agency with a brief situation analysis explaining the context in which the communications will take place. Can a case study support the advocacy campaign?
- ♠ Outline which events or actions have occurred to create a need for the planned activity. How does this fit with other relevant CPL advocacy efforts?
- ♠ Provide research on the benefits of competition to support the rationale for the campaign.
- ♠ Set goals and objectives for the campaign, ensuring they are aligned with the wider advocacy campaign goals and objectives.
- ♠ Clearly state the target audience and socio-economic grouping.
- ♠ Clearly state the theme and key messages.
- ♠ Clearly state the preferred or essential delivery method and tools.
- ♠ Request and seek approval for budget.
- ♠ Clearly state campaign/timeline, measurement and campaign evaluation mechanisms.

CAMPAIGN LAUNCH

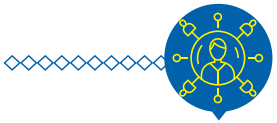
The success or failure of a campaign launch is often determined by a number of contributing factors, which should always be considered when planning and implementing a campaign launch:

Level of endorsement and internal support:	The more senior the individual launching the campaign, the higher profile the coverage and campaign will be. A CA should seek the highest possible government official or identified champion to launch a competition advocacy campaign in order to maximise the significance and success of the campaign.
Resources:	Resources assigned to the campaign launch event should reflect its importance. It is vital to ensure there are interesting press packs, relevant digital media to accompany statements, branded backdrops for (TV) camera points, and refreshments for the media/attendees.
Venue:	The location and format of the campaign launch can have a significant impact on the attendance and coverage it receives. The CA are encouraged to develop creative and headline-grabbing ways to launch an advocacy campaign.

Recording and logging advocacy activity is useful for because it:

- Provides information that can be used for ongoing monitoring, review and evaluation
- Identifies leads and areas of activity that need to be followed up
- Provides data for performance management
- Contributes towards a contact database
- Is a source of information for continuity and avoids potential duplication of efforts

There are a number of software programs that can assist with logging activity. Common data capture software programs include Microsoft Excel and Access, as well as the database management systems specific to a CA. What is important is that advocacy activity is recorded as an integral part of the overall advocacy process.



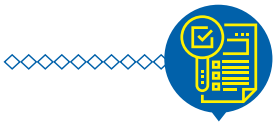
MAINTAINING CAMPAIGN MOMENTUM

Once a campaign has been launched and the initial excitement and activity is over, there is a risk that the momentum will decrease. This is normal, but CA staff must guard against this happening, as it is key to capitalise on the coverage and interest the launch has generated. Therefore, a CA should consider a number of tactics to keep up the momentum of advocacy efforts and ensure that promoting a competition culture is "front of mind" among relevant stakeholders. Specifically, this could entail:

When	What	Who with
Within days of launch	♦ Follow-up meetings ♦ Interview with key staff / policymaker / champion ♦ Internal communications campaign	♦ Key stakeholders ♦ Trusted journalists ♦ CA staff to generate ownership
Within weeks of launch	High-profile meeting / memorandum of understanding (MoU)	CA commissioner and advocacy partner (e.g. chamber, other minister)
Within months of launch	Event to promote CPL	Identified stakeholder groups
A year after launch	♦ Re-launch ♦ Staff rewards events	♦ Staff to review milestones and priorities for the following year ♦ Staff to celebrate successful advocacy

SECTION 3:
MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF ADVOCACY ACTIVITIES

This section details why measuring and evaluating advocacy activities of CA is important and when reviews should be undertaken. The section also describes the various methods and sources of information available.



MEASURING ADVOCACY ACTIVITIES

Measuring advocacy activities provides a CA with a rich source of data to analyse and evaluate the impact of an advocacy campaign and wider advocacy efforts. This substantiates both performance management and the planning of future advocacy activity.

In reviewing an advocacy campaign, decisions about what to measure should be made. This can include the following:

- Activities – what and how many advocacy activities have been carried out
- Interim outcomes – signaling important progress, such as changes to some policy or regulation
- Goals – indicating what the advocacy strategy aimed to accomplish
- Impact – significant changes as a result of the advocacy campaign

An accurate record of advocacy activities undertaken by a CA provides a number of useful data points that can be further analysed:

Area of analysis:	Identifies:
Individuals or stakeholder groups covered in each recorded activity	♦ Successes ♦ Gaps and challenges
Frequency of contact	♦ "Friends of competition", champions and allies ♦ "Veto players"
Relationship cultivation	♦ Need for assigned relationship managers
Key thematic messages	♦ Topical issues and major challenges for CPL ♦ Special considerations

EVALUATION OF EVENTS

Advocacy activities that target larger or influential groups of stakeholders require separate, more in-depth analysis and evaluation. This is because they are often higher profile, resource intensive and have clear objectives and goals. They also typically generate follow-up action for the CA and leads for future advocacy:

Type of event	Notes
Conferences and fora:	When organising a public event attracting multiple stakeholders, a CA should ensure all attendees complete an evaluation form at the end. This allows the CA to learn for future events and helps secure require resources. Aside from addressing administrative arrangements made for the event, the feedback should also address the following: ♦ Has the event met its objectives? ♦ What were they key learning points from the event? ♦ Which areas would attendees like to learn more about? ♦ Will they attend future events?
Technical training sessions:	It is also recommended to ask attendees for their feedback in order to evaluate the quality and effectiveness of the training, notably in terms of the content, structure and resource persons or facilitators engaged. Aside from checking whether the training has been deemed relevant and useful, specific technical questions can also be included in the feedback form in order to assess the degree of understanding of participants concerning the subjects at hand ("post-test").
Employee engagement events:	A feedback form should also be developed for activities that are particularly geared to the staff of a CA, such as meetings with the management or in-house trainings. Suggestions derived from the forms can be taken up for improving similar activities in the future.

DIGITAL IMPACT

Measuring online activities is based on statistics on the number of times a page has been visited, message received or digital interaction achieved. For internet or intranet activities, the IT department of a CA can provide basic statistics on page visits, length of visits and other data that are useful to understand the users' habits. More specifically, the following could be reviewed:

- ♦ Most popular pages – number and frequency of visits
- ♦ Time of visit – what time of day most visits occur
- ♦ Geography – country or region the visitors are located
- ♦ Visitor location – where are visitors accessing the website, i.e. government department, corporate, private (requires IP address)
- ♦ Searches – how the visitor found website, search words used
- ♦ Interactivity – engagement of viewers, e.g. use of comments, contact forms, etc.

For social media accounts, each application has its own day-to-day management and measurement. Social media accounts are easy to manage internally, and each application will send regular engagement reports to the account manager/page owner.

CONTACT DATABASES

Throughout the course of an advocacy campaign, contacts are made and networks expanded. Capturing and regularly reviewing these contacts as part of a comprehensive database is highly recommended to enhance continuous engagement and follow-up.

MEDIA MONITORING AND ANALYSIS

The impact and success of the media activity undertaken by a CA can be evaluated either through quantitative or qualitative analysis. This is normally conducted on a routine basis by the communications or other relevant department of the CA.

Quantitative analysis focuses more on the amount of press coverage received on any given topic. The advantage is that it shows the success value of media relations' activity during an advocacy campaign. The disadvantage is that it hardly reveals the impact or influence achieved, or resulting behavioural change.

Printed press: Counting the articles on a specific subject, their length and where in the respective publication they have been placed (e.g. cover page, editorial etc.). Another option is to convert the coverage Advertising Equivalent Value (AVE). This is taking the amount of coverage achieved, the publication's circulation and then converting it into a value based on what the same space would cost if a paid advertisement or advertorial had been placed.

Broadcast media (TV, radio): Measuring the length of time given and when the broadcast coverage achieved. Similarly, the time of the broadcast coverage is taken into account (e.g. evening national news headline story vs. daytime regional radio programme). It is also possible to convert the coverage into an AVE.

Quantitative analysis, on the other hand, focuses on the impact of advocacy activities and sets out to measure perceptions, behavioural changes and levels of engagement. This constitutes a far more sophisticated means of measuring the impact of advocacy and is typically applied over a longer period of time.

POLLING AND FOCUS GROUPS

Conducting polls and focus groups particularly makes sense when engaging with consumers or members of the general public. Aside from specialised market research, less costly options usually include online polling. A CA should consider the use of polls and focus groups for their advocacy work, focusing on areas where impact is more critical, particularly at the early stages of a long-term campaign. The results will provide valuable data for a CA to adjust existing or to plan future advocacy activities.

Key success factors to running focus groups:

- Sample criteria – Selecting the right individuals to attend, based on previous stakeholder analysis.
- Incentives – Complementing an invitation with discount vouchers, books or other giveaways for the attendees.
- Accessibility – Attracting more attendees by holding the focus group discussion in a central location.
- Focus group theme – Designing and framing questions to maximise engagement and encourage candid and honest replies.
- Professional facilitation – Moderating discussions to keep them on track and in line with the objectives of the CA. Distractions in discussions will distort and impact the quality of the data gathered.
- Data analysis – Assessing clear trends, issues and opportunities flagged up.

ECONOMIC STATISTICS

Various government departments produce an array of statistics as part of their regular reporting processes. These are essentially designed to assist governments with future strategy, policy and budget planning, and are an accurate, attributable source of information. As CPL is directly linked to economic activity, a CA should review which statistics that are currently produced officially and review what is relevant.

Market studies also offer valuable data that assists a CA with the evaluation of advocacy efforts: for example, a government agency that focuses on foreign investment and identifies an increasing trend in foreign-backed inward investment, following a competition-related reform that has been backed by advocacy activities.

A CA could consider further indicators to assist in evaluating the impact of competition advocacy, notably the number of requests for consultation or briefings following an advocacy activity, or the number of complaints received by the CA. Additional sources of information for consideration by a CA include:

- Case studies or commission findings (market reviews/ research) on specific sectors
- Enforcement cases concluded and to be used for evidence-based advocacy, demonstrating (and quantifying, if possible) benefits for consumers and businesses
- Annual reports to document activities and achievements
- Speeches by senior officials that refer to CPL
- Minutes or reports from joint working committees
- Independent experts commissioned to review competition issues in the overall economy

ASSESSING THE NEED FOR CONTINUED ADVOCACY

Review and evaluation is not a one-off, but a continuous exercise, also in the context of competition advocacy. As advocacy is a soft skill, backed by supporting tools, regular review is essential and should cover the following aspects:

Messages	How current and relevant are the key thematic messages? As covered in earlier sections, there are a number of factors that can potentially impact the effectiveness and credibility of key messages.
Stakeholders	What influence and behavioural changes have been achieved? How effective is the stakeholder targeting? Are the right people attending, listening and acting upon the information shared during advocacy activity?
Methodology	How effective are the means of advocacy used? What is popular and what is challenging in terms of attendance and invitation acceptance.
Tools	How effective are the advocacy tools used? Which people use which tools as an information source during an advocacy campaigns? Committing future resources to develop tools that are actually applied and deemed useful by the targeted stakeholders is critical to maintain momentum and reinforce a competition culture.
Feedback	What recurring themes are evident during advocacy activities? Advocacy is a two-way process, and data captured from stakeholder feedback can be valuable for future planning.

Reviews of advocacy activities can be undertaken at any given time, with intervals depending on what a CA is comfortable with. However, it is recommended to conduct short reviews immediately following a meeting or event, and to note feedback and other suggestions systematically. More detailed reviews on a monthly or quarterly basis do not only serve reporting purposes, but also help assign resources. Finally, annual reviews should be done to assess the impact and results achieved by advocacy, as the basis for designing future campaigns.

Moreover, it is also useful for a CA to periodically conduct a survey to gauge the level of awareness regarding CPL among different stakeholders groups. This will enable the CA to assess if their outreach has been successful and has had any effect. This is in the understand that creating a competition culture across ASEAN is a continuous exercise, so review and evaluation should be integral to the working practices of CA.

ANNEX

42 TOOLS AND TEMPLATES

42 Stakeholder map
43 Key message framework
45 Briefing note for VIPs / champions
46 Campaign planning template
47 Media request / activity template
48 Press release
49 FAQs
50 Feedback form

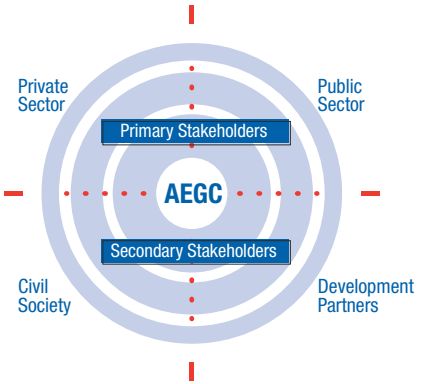
X CASE STUDIES:
"Successful Approaches to Competition Advocacy in ASEAN"

51 Advocating for the Passage of a National Competition Law in Lao PDR
51 Towards a Unified Government Approach to Competition Reforms in the Philippines
52 Reviewing the Scope of the Competition Law vis-à-vis State-Owned Enterprises in Thailand
53 Countering Price-Fixing among Professional Bodies in Malaysia
53 Addressing Public and Private Barriers to Entry in Vietnam
54 Assessing the Degree of Competition in Key Sectors of the Indonesian Economy
55 Striking a Regulatory Balance regarding Disruptive Innovations in Singapore's Taxi Industry

TOOLS AND TEMPLATES

1 STAKEHOLDER MAP

Purpose:	To analyse the stakeholder landscape for strategic planning and messaging alignment.
When to use it:	As a basis to kick off the strategic planning AND review process. Results of this exercise to be included in the advocacy strategy of the CA.
Setting:	Brainstorming session or workshop with CA senior management to map all relevant stakeholder groups, as well as identify specific champions or "veto players" that would need special attention in advocacy activities.
Facilities and materials:	Meeting room, pin board or flipchart. Follow-up time to validate findings and approve recommendations of stakeholder analysis and identification of priority groups.



2 KEY MESSAGE FRAMEWORK

Purpose:	To provide high-level guidance on thematic messages to be used in all advocacy activites, as well as relevant FAQs, facts and figures and stakeholder alignment.
When to use it:	During the strategic planning phase of an advocacy campaign.
Setting:	Workshop with senior management and technical experts and to be shared with all levels of the CA.
Facilities and materials:	Meeting room, pin board or flipchart. Necessary source information: • broader government priorities; • overall strategy of the CA; • stakeholder groups; • facts and figures (e.g. case studies, market studies and enforcement statistics).

FULL MESSAGE FRAMEWORK WITH FAQ'S AND STAKEHOLDER ALIGNMENT

Key thematic message	Benefits	Frequently asked questions and answers – FAQ's		Supporting facts and figures (Varies within each AMS)	Target stakeholder groups
		FAQ's	Answer		
Creates better deals for customers	• Increases consumer choice • Increases quality of products and services • Lowers prices • Increases innovation • Stimulates consumer spending	How does competition create better deals?	Competition offers deals that improves quality and innovation - and lowers prices.		• Consumers • Consumer protection agencies • Business
		Why is competition good for consumers?	Competition provides consumers with enhanced choice, better quality and lower prices.		
		How does competition affect prices?	Competition creates intense pricing improvements amongst traders and suppliers to secure customers.		
		What impact does competition have on quality of products and services offered?	Increased market participants and innovation drives improved quality, products and services		
Creates an environment that supports SME development	• Stimulates consumer demand • Encourages innovation • Workforce expands – creates new jobs • Increases quality of products and services	How can competition stimulate consumer demand?	Increased market presence increases consumer choices		• Large and small businesses • Government
		How would an SME benefit from an increased workforce (as a result of increased demand)	Increases productivity to meet growth in consumer demand		
		What impact does increased consumer demand have on the job market?	Create more job opportunities which stimulates the wider economy		
		How would an SME increase its quality of products and services as a result of increased competition?	Invests in research, development and innovation to create new or improved		

Key thematic message	Benefits	Frequently asked questions and answers – FAQ's		Supporting facts and figures (Varies within each AMS)	Target stakeholder groups
		FAQ's	Answer		
Promotes economic growth	• Generates incentives in marketplace • Increases productivity • Increases economic activity • Lowers operating costs • Creates regional competition and growth • Workforce expands – creates new jobs	What incentives does competition generate?	• To seek and secure new opportunities for business growth • To secure a bigger market share of business		• Large and small businesses (domestic and foreign) • Government
		How does competition impact economic growth?	• Increases productivity and assists with the lowering and elimination of barriers to market entry. • New market entrants generate new competitive forces.		
		How does regional competition generate growth?	Regional competition reduces barriers to entry of new markets and consumers - and generates free market forces.		
Generates investment and innovation	• Entry level obstacles and barriers eliminated • Increases investor confidence • Attracts foreign investment • Facilitates and supports Bilateral / Multi-lateral free trade agreements	How does competition encourage investment and growth?	Competition encourages investment in innovation human resources and infrastructure as it drives increased productivity . Competition also assists with the lowering and elimination of barriers to market entry.		• Large and small businesses (domestic and foreign) • Investment houses/ sources of finance • Technology/ innovation sectors • Foreign governments/ trade bodies
		How can competition eliminate obstacles and barriers to market entry?	More market players eliminates anti-competitive practices.		
		How can free trade agreements support competition?	Free trade agreements – either bi-lateral or multi lateral – creates confidence and trust within the market players and their respective economies.		
Promotes a transparent regulatory environment	• Trust in public administration • Protection for businesses and consumers • Coordination in public policy • Better service delivery for consumers and business	How does competition promote transparency?	Competition provides market players with a clear structure for their products and prices.		• Judiciary • Enforcement agencies • Line Ministries in charge of enforcement agencies
		How does competition regulation benefit businesses?	Competition law re-enforces standards, drives quality, encourages trust and generates confidence.		
		How does competition regulation benefit consumers?	A competition regulator provides protection, generates trust and builds confidence with those providing or consuming products and services.		
Creates a better deal for public services	• Open and transparent tendering of public services • Better value for publicly funded economic activity • Better goods and services supplied to the public				• Government procurement departments • Government audit departments

3 BRIEFING NOTE FOR VIPS / CHAMPIONS

Purpose:	To brief and help prepare CA advocates with all relevant details.
When to use it:	In advance of advocacy activities to manage the entire process and provide advocates with key arguments and "at a glance" information.
Setting:	One-to-one discussion on upcoming advocacy activities.
Facilities and materials:	Necessary source information: • targeted stakeholders; • key message framework; • activity details (incl. occasion, focus and intent of the planned advocacy activity).

Nature of Advocacy Activity:	
Name and contact details of main point of contact:	
Agreed/Approved: **Time/date:** **Decision made by:**	Not Approved: Time/date: **Decision made by:**
Date and Time of Activity:	**Location:**
Subject/Topic of Activity:	**Advance questions or additional requests made**
Key thematic messages and talking points:	
Notes:	
Follow-up Action:	
Required/requested supplementary information:	**Archive reference for press clips:**

4 CAMPAIGN PLANNING TEMPLATE

Purpose:	Management tool and step-by-step guide on the main elements to planning an advocacy campaign.
When to use it:	To follow up on gathering the necessary information to carry out an advocacy activity, once a decision has been made by the CA management.
Setting:	Planning of an advocacy campaign from point of concept to point of delivery.
Facilities and materials:	Necessary source information: • direction from CA management; • appointment of a core working group or task force; • campaign sponsor (i.e. highest level official supporting and paying for campaign); • campaign director (i.e. senior technical expert responsible for the advocacy campaign); • campaign spokesperson (i.e. the public face of the advocacy campaign); • campaign project manager (i.e. for day-to-day management and coordination); • budget guidelines; • campaign evaluation criteria.

Campaign Brief:			
Campaign Objectives:			
Core Campaign Working Group			
Campaign Sponsor:			
Campaign Director:			
Campaign Spokesperson:			
Campaign Project Manager:			
Priority stakeholders	Key thematic message	Tools and methods	Timeline
Special campaign considerations			
Budget requirements (detailed spread sheet attached)			
Specialist contractor requirement – Y/N?			
Proposed tender invitation list:			
Agreed/Approved: Time/date: Decision made by:		Not Approved: Time/date: Decision made by:	
Schedule (target completion dates)			
Campaign Evaluation and Review			
Comments and future recommendations:			
Follow-up Action:			

5 MEDIA REQUEST / ACTIVITY TEMPLATE

Purpose:	To officially respond to media requests and/or draft press releases.
When to use it:	When a press or communications officer has received a media or interview request, or a press release needs to be issued.
Setting:	Day-to-day gathering of key information to manage a press interview or produce a press release.
Facilities and materials:	ecessary source information: • key message framework; • journalist contact details; • subject of story/focus and intent of the story; • relevant to advocacy efforts y/n?

Type of media activity requested/proposed	
Deadline for approved draft:	
Approved: Time/date: Decision made by:	Not Approved: Time/date: Decision made by:
Outline details:	
Relevant facts:	
Quote requirements/details:	
Target media:	
Photographic requirements:	
Third Party involvement:	
Required/requested supplementary info:	Archive reference for press clips:

6 PRESS RELEASE

Purpose:	To proactively release information to the media.
When to use it:	Major announcements, events, newsworthy information.
Setting:	Day-to-day.
Facilities and materials:	Necessary source information: • key message framework; • direction from CA management; • attributable quotation; • authorised approval (communications department); • media contact list.

Department Logo

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
(Insert date)

THE TITLE OF THE PRESS RELEASE

Name of capital: Today (****, 2016), The first sentence should be 15 – 20 words and should sum up what the press release is about. The first paragraph should be no more than two sentences.

The second paragraph often is the official comment from organisational leadership. For example, Commenting on this significant development, (insert name) said:

> "We have set ourselves robust competition policies and laws, as our government is committed to creating a competition culture to promote fair trading and economic growth in Laos.." The quote can be one or two sentences and should be indented so it stands out more.

The remaining paragraphs should give more detail and facts relating to the story, enabling journalists to write a more engaging story and for the public to be better informed about what is being reported.

- e n d s -

♦ INSERT BOILER PLATE

This is standard non-time sensitive information that is included in every press release.
For example historical information, facts and figures, e.g. number of staff, mandate of department (decree/law references).

♦ INSERT NOTES TO EDITORS (OPTIONAL)

These are any special instructions, administrative or general information for the news organisations receiving the press release, e.g. details of any images available, instructions for interview bids, time of an event related to the story. For example:

- **INSERT YOUR WEBSITE AND SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS HERE**
- **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION AND INTERVIEW BIDS, PLEASE CONTACT:**
  Name; designation; mobile tel; e-mail

7 FAQS

Purpose:	To add more information and arguments to key thematic messages (e.g. by "hot topic").
When to use it:	Major announcements, events, newsworthy information.
Setting:	Day-to-day.
Facilities and materials:	Necessary source information: • key message framework; • direction from CA management.

Example of a "hot topic" on exemptions of competition laws to State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs), with illustrative answers:

Q1: SOEs are created to support government policies and are therefore closely associated with the state. Why do they need to be subject to the competition law?

A1: SOEs may present competition concerns in an open market if they are competing with private businesses offering the same product or services.

SOEs can also harm competition and consumer interests in the same way as a private enterprise and must therefore operate under the same legal framework. The competition law addresses behaviour in the market, and if an SOE behaves in an anti-competitive manner, it must be subject to the law, unless it has been specifically exempted by the law.

Q2: Under what circumstances are SOEs exempt from competition law?

A2: …

Q3: What is defined as anti-competitive behaviour?

A3: …

Q4: How do Competition Commissions monitor and act upon anti-competitive behaviour with SOEs?

A4: …

8 FEEDBACK FORM

Purpose:	A management tool to evaluate an advocacy campaign and derive recommendations for possible follow-up action.
When to use it:	At the end of an advocacy campaign, or at a point when evaluation is required.
Setting:	Campaign director and/or project manager to ensure evaluation needs and requirements are available, organised or requested.
Facilities and materials:	-

Campaign Brief:			
Campaign Objectives:			
Campaign Duration:			
Overview of Campaign			
Campaign Sponsor:			
Campaign Director:			
Campaign Spokesperson:			
Campaign Project Manager:			
Campaign Working Group:	**Methods and tools used**	**Budget and contractor**	**Set performance indicators**
Campaign Sponsor			
Campaign Director			
Campaign Spokesperson			
Campaign Project Manager			
Evaluation data required: e.g. digital, media analysis, focus groups, statistical reports, case studies, etc.			

SUCCESSFUL APPROACHES TO COMPETITION ADVOCACY IN ASEAN

LAO PDR: ADVOCATING FOR THE PASSAGE OF A NATIONAL COMPETITION LAW IN LAO PDR

In January 2016, the Law on Business Competition of Lao PDR came into effect. In compliance with commitments under the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) and national priorities, the law itself is the product of an intensive consultative process that involved multiple stakeholders throughout the various drafting stages.

From the beginning, the **Ministry of Industry and Commerce (MoIC)** set up an inter-ministerial drafting committee to discuss the proposed provisions of the new law. Over the course of several years, representatives of additional ministries were invited to attend the meetings on a regular basis and provide their comments. This was done in the understanding and realisation that the competition law has a bearing on many other regulations and policies, such as telecommunications or finance and procurement. In parallel, sub-national consultation workshops were carried out in selected provinces to raise the awareness about competition issues.

Moreover, in cooperation with a local research institute, the MoIC undertook a competition assessment, comprising a comprehensive mapping of key industries, a legal inventory of competition-related regulations and laws (e.g. on consumer protection), as well as a perception survey among stakeholders. The competition assessment serves to provide at least soft evidence about the competition problems in the country, and as such, is an important advocacy tool.

Learning from the experiences of more advanced competition regimes, both within ASEAN and beyond, has also been instrumental in the formulation of the Lao competition law. In the final stages of drafting, a study visit to Indonesia was organised for the MoIC together with the responsible committees of the National Assembly. The study visit was not only a good example of an "ASEAN helps ASEAN" approach to enhance the understanding about competition issues.

It also demonstrated the "fluidity" and flexibility of stakeholder engagement and advocacy priorities during different phases of introducing and implementing a competition law. Advocating with legislators may only be a priority from time to time, when there is a real opportunity or momentum for regulatory reform.

TAKE-AWAY TIPS

Competition advocacy is a continuous endeavour and effort that is relevant already at the stage of drafting a competition legislation. This is meant to garner and ensure the support of key stakeholders for the competition law from the very beginning, and to counter potential adversity at a later stage by government agencies, legislators or businesses. In fact, competition advocacy continues to be crucial once the law has been passed and CA set up, with some jurisdictions opting for a grace period to allow for businesses to familiarise themselves with the provisions and implications of the law first. Drawing up a stakeholder map can direct advocacy activities in a more systematic manner, but such map needs to be periodically reviewed in order to reflect changing dynamics and priorities.

PHILIPPINES: TOWARDS A UNIFIED GOVERNMENT APPROACH TO COMPETITION REFORMS IN THE PHILIPPINES

Until the passage of the Philippine Competition Act in July 2015, the Philippines followed a sectoral approach to competition policy, with industry-specific laws enforced by more than 60 regulators. This required coherent policies across different agencies and oversight procedures, in order to counter fragmented enforcement and politicisation of the regulatory process.

With the creation of the Office for Competition (OFC) under the Department of Justice in 2011, the challenges inherent in the country's sectoral approach to competition policy were given due attention and subsequently became part of the economic justice agenda of the Philippine government. As the country's first CA, the OFC recognised the power of advocacy as complementary to enforcement and has been proactively disseminating the benefits of competition to the general public. In doing so, an emphasis was placed on a number of sectors, namely energy, telecommunications, transportation, and commodities. This prioritisation was based on the assessment that these sectors have the most impact on consumers.

The sector-specific advocacy of the OFC has brought about important insights into specific industries. In the commodities sector, for example, an investigative report showed that the rise on the prices of garlic and onion was not caused by a shortage in supply, but due

to a cartel that gets the most import permits and can dictate prices. Meanwhile, advisories issued to banks about uniform fees, and to airlines and internet service providers about misleading advertisement have been highly beneficial for consumers.

A cornerstone of the OFC's strategy was initiating a continuous exchange with the responsible sector regulators and other stakeholders. To this end, the Sector Regulators Council, OFC Working Groups (e.g. with a think tank on research and advocacy), as well as the Competition and Regulatory Reforms Experts Group (CRREG) were set up. The idea is to maintain increasingly institutionalised stakeholder relations through platforms for regular dialogue, networking and cooperation. In combination with other advocacy tools (such as policy papers and recommendations, annual reports, market studies, seminars, etc.), this is instrumental in building relations with the larger competition community, particularly the existing sector regulators. It has also contributed to the identification of "competition champions" who in turn have helped catapult the competition policy agenda to the forefront of national economic discourse and policy-making.

TAKE-AWAY TIPS

The work of the OFC showcases the importance of advocacy within the context of a fragmented sectoral regulatory environment. A number of considerations were critical in the process, starting with a clear prioritisation on strengthening competencies and confidence, along with a focused resource allocation. Ensuring a unified approach to competition issues required promoting inter-agency coordination through dynamic and constructive stakeholder engagement, including communication plans as well as periodic and context-specific consultations. Moreover, traditions, such as the annual observance of the National Competition Day, can help raise the public awareness about competition policy and reinforce a national competition culture.

THAILAND: REVIEWING THE SCOPE OF THE COMPETITION LAW VIS-À-VIS STATE-OWNED ENTERPRISES IN THAILAND

The Competition Act of Thailand, dated 1999, includes an exemption of State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs) which currently fall under the law of budgetary procedure. This is set to change with a proposed amendment prepared by the **Office of the Trade Competition Commission (OTCC)** that includes a number of revised provisions to create a more competitive business environment.

The amendment, which is slated for submission to the Cabinet in early 2016, foresees an end to discrimination on the basis of ownership. The proposal to extend the scope of application of the competition law to SOEs is in accordance with the principle of competitive neutrality which seeks to maintain a level playing field between public and private business. Competitive neutrality has been gaining ground in international discussions and calls for the same set of rules apply to public and private enterprises, irrespective of ownership. With the objective of safeguarding efficiency, business activities by government-linked or government-controlled enterprises should not have a competitive advantage over private ones.

The OTCC consulted with academic experts and commissioned a study to analyze business structures as well as the competition practices of SOEs in selected sectors, namely airlines, electricity, petroleum refinery, finance and banking, transport and tobacco. The study provides valuable recommendations to substantiate the proposed amendment of the competition law, with a view towards enhancing the effectiveness of enforcement.

TAKE-AWAY TIPS

Market studies and other research on competition issues can serve to obtain credible information about the potential impact of anti-competitive behavior on sectors and stakeholders. As such, they can be a key advocacy tool and help persuade policy-makers about advancing competition-related reforms, and even support an amendment of prevailing laws and regulations.

MALAYSIA: COUNTERING PRICE-FIXING AMONG PROFESSIONAL BODIES IN MALAYSIA

In 2013, the **Malaysia Competition Commission (MyCC)** completed a "Market Review on Fixing of Prices and Fees by Professional Bodies in Malaysia under the Competition Act 2010 [Act 712]". The report highlighted the need to devote attention to the professions from a competition policy perspective. Aside from describing key restrictions to competition and their alleged general interest justifications, the report also proposed a future course of action aimed at encouraging more pro-competitive mechanisms.

The research involved 131 bodies or associations in 35 sectors. Its findings indicated a considerable number of instances where Malaysian professional bodies appear to regulate prices or fees for their members. This was either backed by a specific legislation or where a governing body had regulatory authority over a certain sector and established a scale of fees for that sector[1].

Although any price fixing agreements that are made in accordance with a legislative requirement are allowed, such agreements must also be carefully assessed against the purpose and principles of the Malaysian Competition Act.

Following the publication of the report, the MyCC organised a series of public consultations with members of professional bodies in order to seek their views and support a review of their price-fixing practices. Furthermore, the MyCC collaborated with the Malaysian Productivity Corporation (MPC) in carrying out a Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA) and a Competition Impact Assessment (CIA). These served to study whether the existing restrictions under national legislations pursue a legitimate public interest objective, and whether there was any leeway for regulatory change.

As one of the major outcomes of the report and subsequent seminars, the Malaysia Institute of Chartered Secretaries and Administrators (MAICSA) issued a technical announcement for its members that it will not proceed with a proposed guide on fee indicators for professional secretarial services as this was not mandated by law. Four other sectors followed suit later in 2015 and issued directives to dismantle their scale of fees, in order to uphold the spirit of the competition law.

TAKE-AWAY TIPS

In promoting fair competition, it is not always necessary for a CA to launch into a full investigative process. Rather, it is important to continuously engage in consultations with different stakeholders and to sensitise them about the need to bring about a competitive environment. A market review can be a good starting point for a CA to advocate for the consideration of competition principles in existing or proposed regulations, based on research and clear evidence.

VIETNAM: ADDRESSING PUBLIC AND PRIVATE BARRIERS TO ENTRY IN VIETNAM

As a crucial part of economic reforms in Vietnam in the wake of transitioning to a market economy, the Vietnam Competition Law was passed and Vietnam Competition Authority (VCA) established in 2005. Since the beginning, the VCA has set a priority on advocacy activities concerning a wide range of subjects and sectors. However, a key obstacle has been sectoral laws that are inconsistent and in conflict with the competition law, thus creating considerable barriers to entry in certain markets. At the same time, enterprises operating in specific sectors continue to have a limited understanding of the competition law and its underlying principles.

Against this backdrop, the VCA has set out to ensure legal coherence and enhance the awareness about the competition law through a number of activities. At the core is an advocacy strategy that comprises two main actions: first, periodically assessing the competition situation in focal sectors[2]; and second, organizing national seminars with relevant stakeholders. Moreover, the VCA has conducted a legal inventory in the form of a report titled "Review of Competition-Related Regulations in Sectorial Regulatory Laws". The purpose is to comprehensively review the entire legal system on sectoral issues, and provide an assessment on the degree of conformity and compatibility (or lack thereof) between the competition law and sectoral laws.

As a result of the report and subsequent consultations, the overall awareness about competition issues among government agencies and the business community has noticeably increased. Furthermore, some sectoral regulations have been replaced in order to avoid any conflict with the competition law.

TAKE-AWAY TIPS

An important lesson is to focus resources, attention and advocacy on selected sectors. Through a combination of activities, notably market studies and the legal review, it was possible for the VCA to provide some analysis and evidence of existing barriers to entry that are either caused by public or private actions. Having specific examples to illustrate competition issues to a variety of stakeholders can facilitate their understanding and promote buy-in for the competition agenda.

1. For details, see: http://mycc.gov.my/sites/default/files/media-review/market_review_Executive_Summary_on_Professional_Bodies_Study.pdf. **2.** Up to now, almost 30 sectors have been reviewed by VCA. See also: https://www.mediafire.com/?rb50bbj9v8n7bfe

INDONESIA: ASSESSING THE DEGREE OF COMPETITION IN KEY SECTORS OF THE INDONESIAN ECONOMY

An important task of a CA is to continuously monitor the degree of competition in strategic sectors of the economy. This is particularly essential to assess any changes in the competition situation following enforcement or advocacy activities. Moreover, a CA often comes under scrutiny from policy-makers and the public who need to see evidence of the effectiveness of a competition authority.

Although the competition law was passed in Indonesia already in 1999, a survey conducted by Commission for the Supervision of Business Competition (KPPU) in 2009 still showed a relatively low degree of awareness and acceptance among the business community. The KPPU found that indicators would be helpful to benchmark business compliance in selected sectors and devised the Competition Perception Index (CPI). The CPI serves to scientifically measure sectoral performance on an annual basis. It looks at certain criteria, such as enterprise and price structures, and quality aspects. At present, the CPI is being piloted to review two sectors, namely airlines and banking. Aside from showing specific benefits of competition, the CPI serves to check whether KPPU's enforcement or advocacy efforts have been successful. As such, it is not only an internal monitoring tool, but also helps explain the impact of KPPU's work to external stakeholders.

As indicated by the CPI, the airline industry has become more competitive over the past years. Part of this is due to an earlier recommendation provided by KPPU concerning a cartel in the airlines industry. Overall, the competition in the sector was not so much on prices than on the quality and number of enterprises. However, the CPI also reflected a decrease in quality, which shows that competition can lead to more choices for consumers, but not necessarily comes with better service standards.

The development of the CPI was not an easy undertaking as it requires reliable proxies, consistent data samples and considerable financial as well as human resources. The lack of similar indices applied domestically also made public acceptance difficult. KPPU therefore tapped the experiences of long-standing CA, such as Australia, as well as that of other agencies concerning related indices on corruption/transparency or competitiveness.

The CPI has been instrumental in enhancing the understanding about competition variables so that they can be addressed in the KPPU's strategic action plan. It provides businesses with a vision on how to enter or develop certain sectors, and it informs consumers about the benefits of fair competition. Finally, by providing evidence of "value for money" on the work of the KPPU, the CPI has helped garner public support, including from legislators and the president, for competition reforms.

TAKE-AWAY TIPS

The CPI can be utilised as a monitoring tool which also helps determine further advocacy or enforcement priorities. As shown by the example of the airlines industry, higher competition should not comprise on safety issues, which could be the focus of the advocacy activity. The experience in Indonesia demonstrates that constant efforts are necessary to develop and enhance the methodology of the CPI, in regular consultations with related agencies. The CPI also shows that reliable, up-to-date data and evidence constitute the best arguments for advocacy both within the government and vis-à-vis the broader public.

SINGAPORE: STRIKING A REGULATORY BALANCE REGARDING DISRUPTIVE INNOVATIONS IN SINGAPORE'S TAXI INDUSTRY

Despite having one of the highest number of taxis per capita in the world, it can be difficult from time to time to get a taxi in Singapore, particularly during peak hours. The reason is the difficulty in matching the supply of taxis with the demand of commuters at specific locations. In order to increase their chances of hailing a taxi, many commuters therefore choose to make a taxi booking instead of hailing a taxi from the street. This can be done by calling any of the six taxi companies directly, or through an online booking using their respective mobile application ("apps"), at a booking fee. Since 2013, so-called third-party taxi booking apps have also become an increasingly popular option. However, were met with protests by taxi drivers and companies as they were perceived as avoiding regulatory requirements as licensed taxi operators.

The Competition Commission of Singapore (CCS) has the mandate to actively monitor industry developments that may have an impact on competition in a market. Although the taxi industry comes under the purview of the competition law, the Land Transport Authority is the regulator that licenses taxi companies and oversees their service performance. Based on a market study, the CCS found that the third-party apps could help match the overall supply of taxis with the demand of commuters. They do not only provide an additional choice for consumers, but also enable taxi drivers to get bookings from other sources besides their own taxi company. As such, they contribute to competition in the market for taxi bookings.

Aside from the benefits for competition, however, it was also necessary to safeguard passenger interests, notably regarding service standards. Unlike licensed taxi companies, the third-party apps are not subject to any form of regulatory oversight. In light of this, the CCS initiated a discussion with LTA in order to share its market study and ensure that LTA, in its own review, considered the possible benefits of third-party apps, along with the concerns raised by market players. The LTA and CCS ultimately agreed to embrace "disruptive innovations", such as the third-party apps, as they could bring about public benefit. At the same time, they vouched to foster entry, growth and commercial flexibility of third-party apps.

The new taxi regulations[3] which took effect in mid-2015 have now made it compulsory for third-party apps to apply for a certificate of registration every three years. This was met with a positive response by stakeholders and hailed as a pragmatic as well as progressive approach to enhancing clarity and certainty in the industry. There have been a number of indications since that the market has benefited from the existence of the third-party apps. The matching of taxi supply and passenger demand rose from 65 per cent to 68 per cent from January to May 2014. This is generally attributed to the growth in use of third-party apps. Moreover, there are further improvements and innovations of the third-party and taxi companies' apps alike, such as more user-friendly interfaces.

TAKE-AWAY TIPS

The policy towards the third-party booking apps in Singapore, as evident in the new taxi regulations, is a good example of how competition, consumer and industry concerns can be effectively balanced. It shows how a competition agency and a sector regulator can reach a common understanding and apply a coherent approach to the benefit of different stakeholders. This outcome would have hardly been possible if not for the relationship that CCS has built with LTA over the years.

3. Once registered, the third-party apps are required to dispatch only licensed taxis and drivers, and to uphold certain standards to safeguard passenger interests. For example, the apps must disclose upfront all information on fare rates, surcharges and the fees payable for the journey. They must also make it optional for commuters to specify their destination before they make the booking. The provision of basic customer support service, e.g. lost-and-found and service feedback, became mandatory as well. In addition, booking fees charged cannot exceed the booking fees charged by the taxi company. Bidding and pre-trip tipping for taxi services will not be allowed to ensure that taxi services remain equally accessible to all.