Communication Strategy of the Baltic Methodist Theological Seminary

2024

Table of Contents

Overview of the Baltic Methodist Theological Seminary 3
Vision and mission 3
Core Values 4
General Activity Priorities 4
Goals 4
External Environment Analysis 5
Current Topics 5
Stakeholders and Target Groups 5
Internal Environment Analysis 7
Current Issues 7
Image of The Baltic Methodist Theological Seminary 7
Desired Identity 8
Summary of Current Communication (SWOT Analysis) 8
Communication Objectives 9
Key Messages 9
Recruitment Messages 10
Spokespersons 10
Channels 10
Communication Tasks Derived from Goals 13
Improving Internal Communication 13
Standardizing Event Communication 14
Systematizing Communication with Stakeholders 14
Potential Threats 15
Expected Outcomes of Implementing the Communication Strategy 15

Overview of the Baltic Methodist Theological Seminary

The Baltic Methodist Theological Seminary (BMTS) is an independent private higher education institution specializing in theology and mission, offering education at the bachelor's level.

With approximately 60 students, BMTS is one of the four institutions in Estonia that provide higher education in theology.

The education is conducted in a session-based format—4 days per month. The seminary offers a hybrid learning option, allowing students to attend classes either on campus or remotely via Zoom if needed. This flexible and adaptable approach aims to accommodate working students, parents, those living in remote areas of Estonia, or even students from other countries, making it easier to integrate studies into daily life.

Starting from the fall of 2024, the seminary will offer an updated curriculum, where after completing general subjects in the first year, students can specialize by choosing one of three tracks: Church Leadership and Multiplication; Gospel and Society; Biblical Studies and Teaching.

BMTS is well-known and has a good reputation among Christians as a theological school.

In the spring of 1998, the Baltic Methodist Theological Seminary became a state-accredited applied private higher education institution. Initially, the teaching was conducted in a daytime format, and later, distance learning options were introduced. In 2010, the daytime education was transitioned to a modular learning system. Until the 2012/2013 academic year, students could choose between a one-year or a four-year study program at the Baltic Methodist Theological Seminary. From the 2013/2014 academic year, BMTS switched to a three-year study program.

The seminary has become confessionally open: while Methodists were the primary attendees, there has been a growing number of Lutheran, Baptist, Pentecostal, and other free church members enrolling each year.

By the spring of 2024, 288 people have graduated from the seminary.

Vision and mission

Vision

To be an educational and competence center that offers students a life-changing learning experience through an engaging educational process, meeting the needs of both the church and society. In addition to providing contemporary theological higher education, it aims to create opportunities for continuing education, being recognized both nationally and internationally.

Mission

To provide theological higher education and offer continuing education that supports the spiritual formation of learners and prepares them for serving both the church and society.

Core Values

1. **The Bible and Personal Relationship with God** - Christian worldview and Methodist theology: These values influence all aspects of the seminary. Biblical ethical guidelines and a Christian worldview define the behavior standards for faculty, staff, and students. The education provided, based on Methodist theology, aims to prepare students for work in churches and Christian organizations. Thus, it is crucial to support students' spiritual growth and biblical knowledge throughout the educational process. Embedding this set of values (the Bible, personal relationship with God, Christian worldview, and Methodist theology) helps achieve the seminary's goal and mission.
2. **Academicism and Practicality, Student-Centeredness, Inclusiveness, and Professionalism** - The vision of BMTS, derived from the seminary's goal and mission, is to be an educational and competence center for churches and organizational units, continuously developing the quality standards of higher education, being nationally recognized, and addressing the needs of the church and society.
3. **Ecumenism, Internationalism, Community, and Integration** - This focuses on relationships and cooperation. Ecumenical and international relations and cooperation create opportunities to promote mutual understanding, overcome theological and cultural barriers, and foster deeper understanding and respect between different cultures and Christian traditions.

General Activity Priorities

BMTS is a significant educational institution for clergy, active church members, branch leaders, and workers in the fields of education and social work. The activities of the seminary's alumni, who possess profound knowledge of Christianity and broad and practical knowledge on how to contribute better in various sectors of society, demonstrate the importance of BMTS.

To ensure that students receive high-quality, internationally competitive education that meets professional requirements:

- **The curriculum is adapted** to the needs and feedback of students, the church, and society.
- **Collaboration through internships** with alumni, various organizations, and denominations is conducted to ensure a sustainable future and better alignment of education with the labor market.
- **International experience is leveraged**, which involves participation of both students and academic staff in international networks, cooperation and research projects, or competitions.
- **Cooperation with other Estonian theological schools** is pursued to share resources and know-how more effectively in the Estonian context.
- **A lot of attention is given to student mentoring** and supporting their personal development.

Goals

The goal of BMTS is to equip Christians with theological education to help them effectively apply their talents and knowledge in church work and find adequate solutions to the current needs of the church and society. Therefore, we aim to maintain and enhance the quality of education.

External Environment Analysis

BMTS's competitors include the Faculty of Theology at the University of Tartu, the Institute of Theology of the Estonian Evangelical Lutheran Church (EELK), and the Higher Theological Seminary of the Union of Free Evangelical and Baptist Churches of Estonia (EKB). Since BMTS offers the opportunity to study in three different languages, the school is international, providing a good opportunity to become acquainted with not only Estonian culture and the Christian landscape but also the traditions and customs of other countries through foreign faculty and international students.

Regularly, some students are from outside Estonia. International students have mainly come from Ukraine, Russia, Belarus, Latvia, Ghana, Nigeria, and Finland. As of spring 2024, BMTS has international students from 11 countries.

Current Topics

BMTS is significantly influenced by government policies regarding foreigners. Internationalization has been an important direction that has enabled BMTS to offer education to foreigners living in Estonia who work or reside here, as well as to those who spend part of their time in their home country or have come to live in Estonia for the study period. The government has taken a direction towards limiting the entry of foreigners, including international students, to Estonia.

Stakeholders and Target Groups

BMTS is surrounded by groups in the communication landscape who expect relevant and interesting information for their activities. These groups are divided into target and stakeholder groups based on their connection and mutual dependence. Stakeholders are linked to BMTS through their activities, and the seminary's stable capacity to engage in its core activities and the effectiveness of these activities depend on them. Stakeholders inherently expect two-way communication, meaning they anticipate not only information but also dialogue. Target groups are those for whom BMTS operates, and it is crucial in communication to reach all these groups with the seminary's messages.

The balance point of BMTS on Porter's competition model shows who, along with BMTS, operates in a communication and competition-influenced field of activity. The balance point diagram of BMTS illustrates how all the groups surrounding the seminary influence BMTS, and the seminary, in turn, influences them, especially its target and stakeholder groups. At the same time, the groups surrounding BMTS are also in mutual influence relationships, which BMTS can partially influence.

BMTS Stakeholders:

- **Employees**
  - Academic staff
  - Administrative staff
- **Students**
  - By language: 15% (10 people) study in Estonian, 14% (9 people) in English, and 71% (46 people) in Russian, based on the 2023-2024 academic year.
  - By study level, curriculum, and specialization
- Ministry of Education and Research
- Bible Schools
- BMTS donors and supporters
- Other higher education institutions through the Council of Rectors
- Key employers and partners in the field: EMK, EKNK, EELK, Salvation Army
- Alumni

BMTS Target Groups:

- Potential students - From Estonia and abroad
- Estonian Christians, various denominations
- Estonian cultural public, and more broadly, the entire society

Other theological schools

- Institute of Theology of the Estonian Evangelical Lutheran Church
- Faculty of Theology at the University of Tartu
- Higher Theological Seminary of the Union of Free Evangelical and Baptist Churches of Estonia

Alternative Target Groups

- Bible Schools
- Online courses

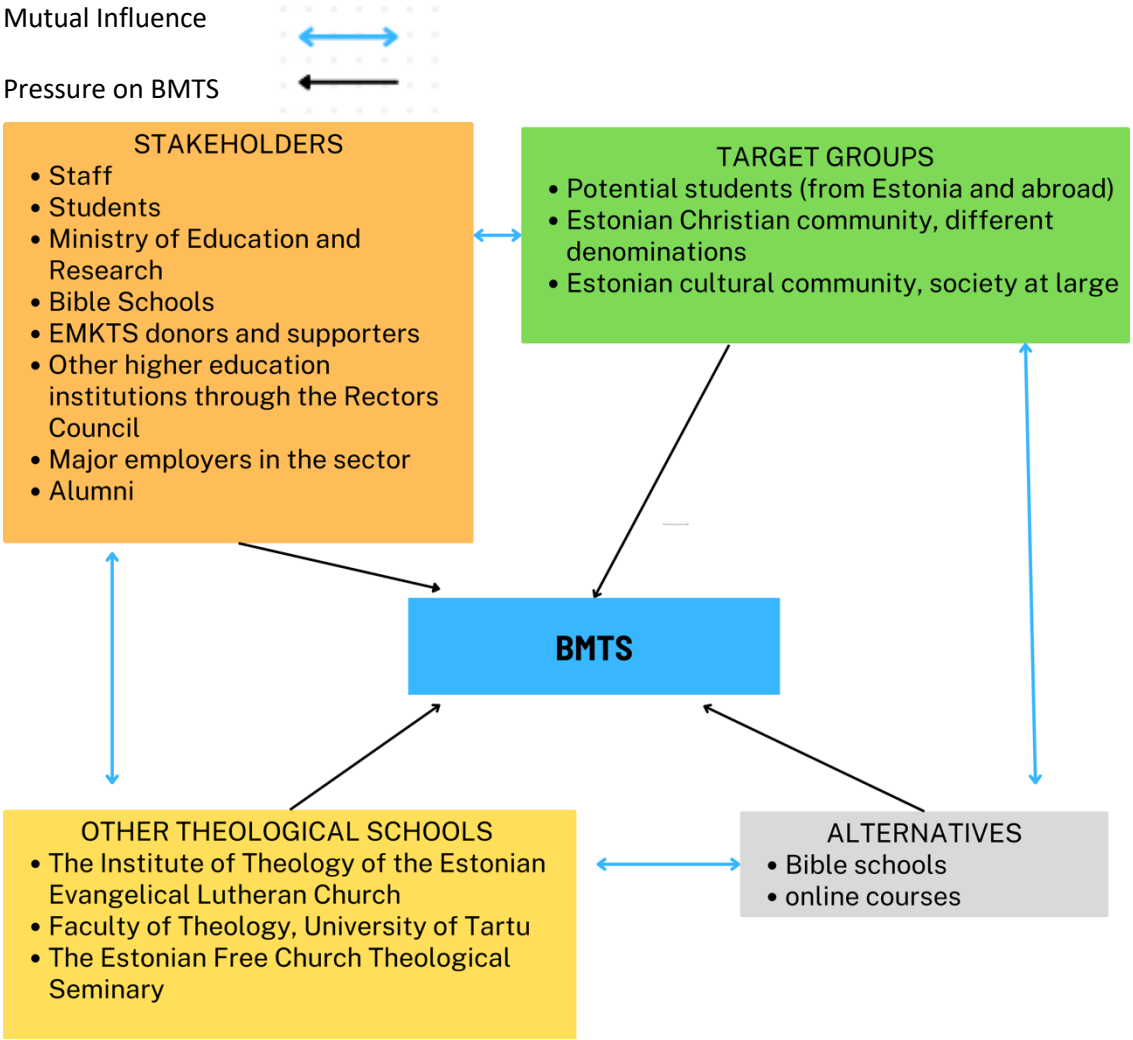


Figure 1. The Impact of External Environment Analysis

Internal Environment Analysis

The Baltic Methodist Theological Seminary (BMTS) is a small school with a warm and friendly atmosphere. Due to its small size, all faculty members and students know each other by name. This allows for flexibility in organizing studies and planning activities when necessary.

Current Issues

Since BMTS offers instruction in three languages simultaneously, this is one of the reasons that encourage international students to come and study at the seminary.

BMTS has consciously made efforts and invested resources in modernizing the seminary's technology, renovating rooms, updating the library, and opening a permanent exhibition on mission themes. The seminary aims to be progressive and meet contemporary needs. As a private institution, one of its goals is also to seek and find additional supporters to remain competitive and engage more in research projects alongside teaching.

Since research work has been somewhat neglected, under the leadership of the new rector, there are plans to involve faculty members more actively in conducting research and publishing professional articles, books, and study materials. There is also a desire to participate more in international conferences, projects, and studies. The goal is to raise the level of Estonian theologians and seminary faculty, while also contributing to the development of research work and participating in projects that can provide financial support to the seminary.

Image of The Baltic Methodist Theological Seminary

In a 2018 thesis where BMTS student Kaire Lotamõis examined the seminary's reputation among Estonian Christians, the prevailing opinion was that the seminary was well-known and had a good reputation. However, since last years, there has been more focus on the seminary's advertising and marketing activities, the previous lack of attention has left its mark, and the younger generation is no longer as familiar with BMTS. This has been a challenge that is now being actively addressed.

There has been repeated feedback from outside the seminary that English is the only language of instruction. Since Estonian students are generally more reserved, and when the majority of the course participants are foreign, Estonian students may get the impression that the seminary is primarily targeted at foreigners. The seminary consciously provides information first in Estonian, both orally and through other means, to reinforce its image as an Estonian school. Additionally, foreign students themselves are interested in the Estonian language and culture, and they have repeatedly expressed interest in participating in excursions, exhibitions, cultural events, and other activities that introduce Estonia. The seminary’s primary goal is to support Estonian congregations and Christians. Therefore, efforts are made to ensure that Estonians see it as "our school" and that it is aimed at them. At the same time, the seminary aims to contribute to integration and demonstrate to students and faculty from different nationalities that studying together is enriching. Despite cultural and linguistic differences, the goal is to learn from each other, step out of comfort zones, and develop on multiple levels.

Desired Identity

BMTS provides a supportive, open learning environment focused on knowing God and developing personal gifts, offering deep biblical knowledge and practical skills for service both within and outside the church. The Estonian Christian community gains the necessary knowledge and skills to give even more back to both the church and society as a whole.

In the seminary team, every contribution is valuable and necessary. The work and efforts of its people are appreciated and recognized.

Summary of Current Communication (SWOT Analysis)

Strengths of BMTS Communication: • **Personal Connections, Small Team:** The small size of the team allows for strong personal connections among staff and students, fostering close-knit relationships. • **Mutual Respect and Friendly Atmosphere:** The environment is characterized by mutual respect and friendliness, contributing to a positive and collaborative working and learning atmosphere. • **Shared Values:** The seminary community shares common values, which strengthens cohesion and unity in pursuing the institution's mission. • **Willingness to Collaborate:** There is a strong readiness to work together, which enhances cooperation and the ability to achieve common goals effectively.	**Weaknesses of BMTS Communication:** • **Lack of Systematic Approach:** The communication processes may lack a structured and organized system, leading to inconsistencies. • **Delayed Information:** Information may not always be communicated promptly, resulting in delays that could affect decision-making and operations. • **Overburdened Workforce:** The staff may be experiencing workload challenges, leading to potential strain on communication efficiency and effectiveness.
Opportunities for BMTS Communication: • **Strategic and Planned Organization of Communication:** Implementing a strategic approach to communication can enhance efficiency and clarity, ensuring that messages are delivered effectively and aligned with the institution's goals. • **Purposeful Use of Communication Channels:** Leveraging communication channels with specific objectives can improve outreach, engagement, and the overall impact of communication efforts within and outside the institution.	**Threats to BMTS Communication:** • **Inconsistent Communication Strategy:** The lack of a consistent communication strategy could lead to misunderstandings, misaligned messaging, and missed opportunities to effectively engage with stakeholders. • **Failure to Implement Suggestions from External Accreditors and Experts Due to Insufficient Communication:** Inadequate communication may result in the failure to follow through on recommendations from external accreditors and experts, potentially affecting the institution's reputation and accreditation status.

Communication Objectives

The communication activities of BMTS support the overall objectives of the organization. The primary goal of BMTS communication is to highlight the impact of BMTS on Estonian society, church circles, as well as in cultural, educational, social sectors, and charitable organizations. Currently, there is a lack of awareness about BMTS in the broader Estonian society, and knowledge about the activities of BMTS alumni is low. A key communication direction is to emphasize the importance, modernity, and practicality of theological education. To ensure the quality of education at BMTS, it is essential to be open on various levels. Being internationally open allows us to enrich our culture and discover new, talented, and capable leaders.

The goal of internal communication is to improve the flow, systematicity, and structure of information within the seminary. This includes increasing the cohesion among students from different courses and nationalities, creating opportunities through value-based communication and shared events, including alumni. In the seminary family, everyone's contribution to internal communication is valuable and necessary. We value initiative and engagement.

Key Messages

Key messages reflect the main positions of the seminary and are intended for use when communicating with all target and stakeholder groups. These key messages are further refined by sub-messages that help convey the message to specific target and stakeholder groups.

In Estonian society: Our goal is to prepare Christian workers and leaders for churches and Christian and charitable organizations by offering theological higher education that meets the needs of the church and society and supports spiritual formation during the learning process.

Internationally: We aim to maintain existing relationships with partners and expand our seminary's connections in important networks, as well as to find additional supporters.

- The Baltic Methodist Theological Seminary (BMTS) is a state-accredited private institution offering theological higher education and further training that meets the needs of the church and society.
- Study is available in Estonian, Russian, or English.
- Learning can take place on-site or via Zoom, in a hybrid format.
- The curriculum offers three tracks, providing opportunities for specialization.
- Regularly held open training sessions and conferences.
- The seminary prepares Christian workers and leaders for churches and Christian organizations.
- To ensure graduates have the necessary skills for the job market, we develop curricula in collaboration with potential employers in the field.
- Students are supported in their spiritual formation, with each having a mentor.
- The curriculum includes a significant practical component, allowing students to apply what they learn immediately.
- Students have the opportunity to showcase their work and culture and learn about others' work and culture.
- BMTS offers a broad-based quality education.
- Seminary alumni work as clergy, chaplains, religion teachers in general education schools, and in various Christian work fields (missions, children's and youth work, diaconal work, counselling, etc.).
- International students can enrich the Estonian labour market with their skills and knowledge. Those returning to their home country or other countries after graduation pass on what they learned in Estonia to their new place of residence.

Recruitment Messages

For use in recruiting new students:

- BMTS offers high-quality education and an environment where students' talents can manifest and develop.
- BMTS offers a new curriculum with three talent-based tracks - Church Leadership and Multiplication, Gospel and Society, Bible Studies, and Teaching.
- The availability of different study tracks provides opportunities to develop talents, skills, and knowledge more specifically, narrowly, and deeply.
- BMTS contributes to the Estonian church and educational landscape, with notable figures such as Jaanus Kangur (2020, 2021 Trainer of the Year), Alur Õunpuu (EKNK Archbishop), Allan Kroll (Light of the Way Bible School Director, Prison Chaplain, Preacher), Veikko Võsu (EKB Union Nõmme Congregation Pastor, Men's Morning Initiator, TTT Organizer), Andrus Kask (Khanty Missionary, Translator, and Church Overseer), Marjana Luist (EMK Church Council Secretary, Editor-in-Chief of Koduteel Magazine), Ele Paju (EMK Youth Work Leader), Ivo Unt (EKNK Toompea Congregation Leader).
- BMTS is open to the world - we have internationally recognized lecturers and educators.
- The seminary emphasizes a flexible and personalized approach to student learning - seminary students receive individual attention and feedback from lecturers and support staff. Every student is assigned a mentor with whom they meet regularly.

Spokespersons

BMTS staff, students, and alumni are important spokespersons and image builders for the organization. Seminary staff influence attitudes and perceptions within the organization, among colleagues, and students. Likewise, staff, students, and (well-known and influential) alumni shape BMTS's image outside the seminary, influencing the attitudes of target and stakeholder groups.

All BMTS employees must understand and acknowledge that they represent The Baltic Methodist Theological Seminary in their actions and statements. Therefore, the BMTS collective must know the organization's values and positions and be able to express key messages. In their interactions with BMTS employees and students, partners, the media, and target and stakeholder groups form their attitudes and perceptions of the seminary.

BMTS does not restrict the media statements of employees and students but encourages them to follow the communication strategy and plan. The Rector and the Rectorate are prepared to provide comments on the following topics: the importance of theology and Christian education in society, the role of Christianity in society, issues related to international students, religious education in general education schools, Christian ethics and morality, etc.

Channels

Public Communication Channels:

- **Media:**
    - Christian television (separate Estonian and Russian channels) (TaevasTV7, LifeTV)
    - Christian magazines, newspapers, portals (Koduteel, Eesti Kirik, Pluss Youth Magazine)
    - Christian radio (Pereraadio, Raadio7, Radio ELI)
    - Friends of Estonia – (monthly newsletter)
    - International Christian media (World Methodist Council newsletter)
    - Direct contact via email with individuals, congregations, and alumni (respective lists)

- **BMTS Public Channels:**
    - BMTS website
    - Facebook
    - Instagram
    - YouTube
    - Posters in seminary and partner organizations' public spaces
    - Roll-ups in seminary spaces and at events organized by the seminary
- **BMTS Public Events:** conferences, training sessions, seminars, music, and discussion evenings
- **BMTS Symbolism:** badges, mugs, t-shirts, and other memorabilia

Stakeholder Communication Channels

Direct communication is the most effective method when engaging with stakeholders, but media also plays a significant role in conveying information to them. Messages about organizational achievements, new directions, and study opportunities should be communicated to all stakeholders through existing channels, new formats, or letters. Since the goal is to increase the sense of community, it is important to inform internal stakeholders about notable achievements and successes of members of the collective.

Stakeholder	Channels
Employees (academic and non-academic)	Internal web (requires continuous development)
	Personal communication on a daily basis (direct contact, email, phone communication)
	Meetings – Dean, Rector (requires systematization)
	Multilevel communication through department heads and academic leads (requires development and communication)
	Colleague recognition system, employee of the year (requires further development)
	In-house events – beginning and end of the academic year, Christmas party, seminar outings – first session, student cafes, prayers, fellowship lunches
	Website/ Social media
	Performance review once a year
	Meetings once a month
	Reporting successes (requires development)
	Operational information dissemination
	Invitations to all important events
Students	Learning information system
	Mailing list, email
	Student representation
	Direct contact
	Two-way communication through faculty (requires development)
	Website/ Social media
	Mentor meetings
	(Formerly Yammer now called) Viva Engage
	Student feedback surveys
	BMTS-branded items (e.g., t-shirts, mugs, everyday usable items) (requires development)
	Student prayer-worship services
Ministry of Education and Research	Communication at the rector's level
	Participation in various working groups
Bible Schools	Regular field-specific seminars (requires development)
	Influencing through media, through individuals (requires development)
	Regular field trips to regions and media coverage (both student and faculty-focused, requires development)

	Invitations to important events for leaders
	Invitations to open trainings, seminars, and conferences
BMTS Donors and Supporters	Major successes and achievements reported via email (requires development)
	Direct communication for funding specific projects
Council of Rectors / Estonian Universities	Regular activity at the level of the Council of Rectors
	Regular meetings between Vice-Rectors and heads of the study department
	Regular meetings of financial staff
Alumni	Involve them more as speakers, partners in cooperation (requires development)
	Mailing list – keeping up to date, useful information (requires development)
	Alumni reunions (requires development)
	Selection of an outstanding alumnus at the end of each academic year
	Feedback surveys (requires development)
Key Employers in the Field	Joint projects
	Providing opportunities for employers to give feedback on teaching practices
	Collaborate on offering internships to students
	Feedback surveys (requires development)

Communication Channels Targeted at Stakeholders

Target Group	Channels
Potential Students from Estonia	Two-way communication through Bible school leaders (requires development)
	Website
	Social media, Facebook, Instagram, YouTube (requires development)
	Pereraadio, Raadio7, Raadio ELI
	Congregation visits (requires development)
	Information events at Bible schools, lectures by faculty
	Printed materials (distributed at Christian events, Bible schools)
	Open days, seminar excursions
	Participation in education fairs (requires development)
Potential Students from Abroad	Website, student and alumni testimonials
	Conferences and other events, faculty as ambassadors for BMTS (requires development)
	Participation in international education fairs through Study in Estonia, distribution of printed materials (requires development)
	Social media recruitment campaign
Estonian Christian Community, Various Denominations	Field-specific media
	General media channels
	Social media
	Congregation visits (requires development)
	Website
	Social media, Facebook, Instagram, YouTube
	Pereraadio, Raadio7, Raadio ELI
Estonian Cultural Public, Broader Society	Field-specific media
	General media channels
	Social media

Communication Tasks Derived from Goals

The task of communication at The Baltic Methodist Theological Seminary (BMTS) is to deliver agreed-upon messages through direct communication, interaction with stakeholders, and public communication. This means that in order to achieve communication goals, it is necessary for key individuals in the organization to significantly contribute to the message delivery.

Improving Internal Communication

To support BMTS's external image, increase visibility, and spread desired messages in the media, it is first necessary to create clarity within the organization. Currently, there is a lack of a system that would facilitate the flow of information both horizontally and vertically within the institution.

Employees mainly receive information orally and via email. Mailing lists have been created. To avoid having to search for information in emails, it is recommended to implement a calendar system that shows employee business trips, home office days, vacations, important meetings, and other relevant information.

Monthly newsletters are recommended as a channel directed at employees, students, and alumni. Topics to cover in the newsletters include:

- Decisions made by the seminary leadership
- Achievements of faculty and students – published articles, conference presentations, contributions to church and community-related projects, and other noteworthy activities
- Events happening within the institution
- Erasmus self-improvement opportunities – courses aimed at staff, job and project offers for students
- Employee anniversaries

The newsletter will restore an official communication channel that functions both horizontally and vertically. It creates an official channel through which information can flow from the bottom up, allowing BMTS staff and students to communicate their activities to the leadership via the communication specialist. The information gathered for the newsletter can also be used in other communications, such as social media, the website, etc. The newsletter itself will keep the team informed about what is happening in the various units and in the leadership of the seminary. The newsletter must be visually attractive and its content should reflect that these are important events, achievements, activities, and developments for BMTS. To ensure that staff can share their event information with colleagues, it should be sent to the communication specialist at an agreed time.

To ensure that BMTS employees feel valued, it is important to further develop the employee recognition system. Create criteria and a nomination system for recognizing colleagues. Additionally, more opportunities should be found for the seminary team to spend time together outside of academic work. It would be beneficial to organize an outing where people can talk in a relaxed atmosphere with colleagues they do not often interact with in a work context, thereby enhancing the sense of unity within the team. Systematic communication is also important towards students. All students should be included in the newsletter recipients to establish a direct channel between the leadership and the students. The newsletter should be prepared in Estonian, Russian, and English.

If possible, visual identity carriers (such as hoodies, T-shirts, bags, etc.) that provide a sense of unity and are used daily should be developed.

Standardizing Event Communication

Since many events (trainings, conferences, etc.) take place at BMTS, it is important to standardize their communication to use work time efficiently and reduce the overlap of seminary events. Open lecture series and conferences where seminary faculty and/or students speak deserve broader attention. These are communicated through:

- Creating events on social media
- The seminary website
- Social media (FB, IG)
- Posters in public spaces
- Radio advertisements (2 weeks before the event) and morning interviews
- Direct communication with partners and training directors of other denominations
- Mailing lists for employees and students
- Alumni mailing list

Systematizing Communication with Stakeholders

Increase BMTS's societal visibility in public media.

Since Bible schools are often a preliminary stage for applicants, regular contact and communication with them should be established, and opportunities for collaboration should be found. A system of visits to various congregations and Bible schools should be created, where both BMTS students and faculty visit to give lectures, preach, lead worship, and introduce study opportunities. Printed materials that remain on-site after the visit should not be underestimated. Pastors and clergy of congregations should also be offered opportunities to further their education at BMTS, for example, by participating in open courses, organizing special mentoring programs.

Create an BMTS fund. The establishment and development of a domestic endowment fund in Estonia. Currently, communication with donors is need-based. It is important to involve them in communication activities, keep them informed of the seminary's successes and developments, and organize a special thank-you event for them once a year.

It is important to involve various stakeholder groups in the development of curricula and continuously find opportunities to discuss broader developments in the field.

Alumni are a great asset at BMTS, but their involvement has so far been modest. The alumni association includes about 300 alumni who meet in some capacity at various events, but information about seminary activities and developments only reaches those who follow the seminary on social media – Facebook, Instagram, and visit the seminary's website. To maintain more contact with seminary graduates, they join the BMTS alumni mailing list upon graduation. A significant communication channel with alumni has been the monthly rector's newsletter. Since in the 2023-2024 academic year, the seminary has had an acting rector instead of a rector, the writing of the newsletter has been on hold during this period but should be reinstated.

Through the newsletter, BMTS can be useful to alumni – providing information about open training and other self-development opportunities and collaborating in ways that benefit both the alumni community and the seminary.

More attention needs to be paid to media work than before. Publishing articles and opinion pieces that carry the key messages and values in both general and specialized media will help create an appropriate image of BMTS among various target and stakeholder groups. It is also important to collaborate more with secular media, which reaches a larger readership – not only the Christian community but also other target and interest groups.

Potential Threats

Increased communication comes with increased attention to the seminary and its members' activities. Therefore, the following threats should be considered:

- In communicating that BMTS is a bearer and developer of (Estonian) Christian and spiritual values, specific actions must support this message.
- The message of Christian and spiritual values comes with a conservative image, which may not appeal to many secular outlets, making them reluctant to collaborate closely.
- In communication, spokespersons are more likely to be faculty members, and opinion pieces are published in specialized theological journals, which have a very narrow readership.

Expected Outcomes of Implementing the Communication Strategy

BMTS's proactive and reactive coverage includes educational and horizon-broadening Christian values and perspectives. The seminary's influence as a bearer of Christian and spiritual values and as an educational institution is visible in the media.

Awareness of BMTS among Christians will increase, recognizing it as a quality and modern institution offering in-depth Bible-related courses, practical skills and knowledge necessary for the development of congregations and service to society, and courses and mentorship that support personal spiritual growth.

In the long term, the prestige of theological education will increase, and collaboration with various denominations and Bible schools will become more effective.

BMTS will be a cohesive and strong "we-feeling" organization with an international and ecumenical staff and students who wish to advance the work of congregations both in Estonia and beyond and contribute to addressing societal challenges.