

## **Promotion, Publicity, and Advertising**

Informing the public of club activities is a crucial piece of the puzzle in gaining respect and interest around the campus in an organization, obtaining new members and in building morale among the membership.

Despite what many students perceive, getting the word out is relatively easy and straight forward. On-campus services for alerting students, staff and faculty are readily available with staff willing to aid student organizations who want to publicize their events. There are many outlets for information to reach the campus population.

### **Marketing Your Program Effectively**

All program marketing should be forced on one idea. Effective marketing is centered on simple principles - attracting attention and stimulating interest, desire, and action.

Identify your program's main selling points.

- Why should someone come to your program?
- What makes the program unique?
- Prioritize a list of the selling points, and use them in your promotion.

Identify who will be interested in your program.

- Target, target, target your audience!!
- How do different groups get their info? Where?
- Different aspects of the program may interest different people.
- Co-sponsorships –not just for \$, but more importantly for support.

The organizations of the University of Kentucky have numerous ways to advertise their events, recruitment information, and regular meetings. By using all that is available a group can have a very effective advertising campaign. The following are different ways to promote, publicize, and advertise:

- Flyers and Bulletin Board Distribution - This is probably the most common form of advertising on campus. Combined with other forms of advertising it can be very effective. Organizations are allowed numerous free campus bulletin board distributions per semester. For the blue bulletin boards in the Student Center be sure to get your material stamped in Student Center room 209.
- Table Tents - Table tents can be purchased for the UK eating areas. Check with UK Dining Services (<http://www.uky.edu/DiningServices/tableTents.html>, 257-6156) for permission.
- Information Tables – Student Center tables are available free of charge to registered student organizations on a first come, first serve basis. Check with the Student Center Directors Office (257-5781) to reserve a table.
- Campus Calendar - The Campus Calendar is produced by the Office of Student Activities, Leadership & Involvement and is published every week in the Kentucky Kernel. Postings in the Campus Calendar are FREE to all campus organizations and University departments. You can submit an event to the campus calendar at <http://www.uky.edu/CampusCalendar/>.

- Campus Ruckus and Student Center Spectacular - There are numerous ways to get your group involved in these events and let the rest of the school know who you are and what you do. Contact the Student Organizations Center (257-1109) for information.
- Organization Email Distribution List - The Student Organizations Center has a distribution list of all email addresses of the registered student organizations that provided this information on the registration form. Organization presidents can post to this listserv.
- UK Today - You can announce an event on UK Today, the University of Kentucky's website for everyone who visits UK's website to see. You can submit your announcement for UK Today at <http://uktoday.uky.edu/add.asp>.
- Kentucky Kernel Newspaper - You may be able to get the newspaper to do a story on an upcoming event or your group can purchase advertising.
- Local Radio, TV, and Newspapers - If you are having a community-wide event, many times you can take advantage of the "community calendar" features that are offered at minimal or no charge. In attempting to market upcoming special events, student organizations often forget to make use of off-campus news sources. Several local radio stations have a tremendous number of student listeners. By using the community service bulletins offered by those stations, student organizations can effectively reach a large student audience and enhance their appearance by making the local air waves. Further opportunities lie in contacting local newspapers and enticing them to cover unique student events, as most newspapers are looking for interesting photos for their readers. Television coverage of your truly special events is a great way to reach the public and a sure morale booster for any organization. If your budget permits, you can also purchase advertising from these sources. Be sure to call several weeks in advance. You can use a press release for print media and public service announcement for radio or television, but there is no guarantee that it will run when you want it to or that it will be seen by the intended customer. In contacting both on- and off-campus media, it is important that your organization provide them with a press release containing the 5 Ws and an H (who, what, where, when, why and how). A press release need not be longer than a page and should include a date for release to the public and a contact person with a phone number for further questions. It is critical, whatever the media outlet you wish to use, your organization contact them with the appropriate lead time. Below are some guidelines for writing releases and PSAs.

#### **Press Release Guidelines**

1. *Identification*: If you don't have letterhead, make sure your organization's address & phone number are included in the upper left hand corner of the page.
2. *Disposition*: This tells the editor when the release should be published. The time, day, date and year should appear in capital letters below the last line of identification. If you want the release published upon receipt, write "FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE."
3. *Headline*: A brief, one-line summary of the release that appears just above the body of the release.
4. *Copy*: The content should be straight news style with an informational sentence in the first paragraph including: "Who, what, when, where and why."

Include a telephone number at the end where someone can call for further information. The release should be double spaced, with the information arranged in order from the most to the least important. Begin your copy about one-third of the way down the first page. This gives the editor ample space to write a lead for your story or for his or her instructions. At the end of the release type ##### under the last line. Never staple pages; use paper clips.

5. *Timing:* Releases should be mailed at least three weeks prior to the event.

#### **Public Service Announcement (PSA) Guidelines**

Follow the same format as with a press release, but include the time it takes to read your PSA; it can be 10, 20, 30 or 60 seconds in length. PSA's should be sent at least two weeks in advance of the date on which you want the announcements made. FCC regulations require that TV/radio stations make public service announcements about programs and events in the community. A PSA cannot sell anything or promote a profit-making enterprise. Stations have the right to decide if and when the PSA will be aired.

#### **Other Publicity**

Flyers, Posters and Handbills:

- Attention value – the first step in getting people to your event.
- Emphasis –one thought or theme.
- White space –allows distinction.
- Simple –it must be quickly understood.
- Placement – put 3 or 4 next to each other.
- Size –use different shapes.
- Color –overlay darks and brights.

Brochures:

- Should include all important information and an invitation.

Letterhead:

- Makes for a nice, professional touch.

#### **Promoting by Word of Mouth:**

- Student Association
- Resident Assistants
- Classes (especially ones that relate to your org.)
- Greek organizations
- Specific majors/departments
- Past participants - “testimonials”
- Faculty
- Alumni
- Personally hand out materials to students

#### **Other Promotional Techniques:**

- Beverage or food information table
- Buttons
- Uniquely shaped posters
- Paper airplane flyers

- Lollipops with ads attached
- Remote control cars with ads attached
- Partially-filled helium balloons with printed message (float at eye level)
- Walking sandwich boards
- Theme related ideas
- Giveaways
- Invite more community participation in events
- Develop a logo or trademark for your club or event
- Develop a mailing list of interested people for specific events
- Use teasers (short one- or two-word signs) to build curiosity
- Buttons or bumper stickers everywhere on everything
- Create video highlighting programs to be played at recruitment events
- Create a core group of individuals who will promote the event
- Gather volunteers, have open information sessions, attend other club meetings
- Kazoos with printed message/logo/slogan
- Fortune cookies with event message
- Door hangers
- Bookmarks
- Post-it notes with pre-printed reminder of an event
- Put your message on classroom chalkboards
- Perform skits in public areas on campus to draw attention to an event
- Host large events (spotlight what you do)
- Phone banking/calling
- Have a “hook” for a slogan
- Get local businesses to publicize or subsidize your program
- Get faculty support
- Put publicity where people are
- Use costumes and/or themes
- Cookouts and bake sales
- Clothing with information or logo
- Give out free tickets or discount tickets on campus
- Co-sponsor your event with another group
- Ask Food Service to sponsor a special food item related to the event
- Place inserts in the campus and local newspapers
- Petition drives
- Act crazy, get people’s attention
- Work off people’s emotions
- Clothespins with stickers for event
- Be clever and excited. Enthusiasm will spread!

**Make sure whatever publicity or promotional item you design:**

*Is functional:* The design must do the job of getting your message to the intended audience.

*Is simple:* Focus on one element that will grab the reader’s attention, and tell the main theme of the message.

*Is understandable:* Test your design or wording on some friends before mass producing.

*Has all the pertinent information:* Name, date, time & place; admission cost, how to get tickets and the sponsors with a phone number to call for further information.

**Make a plan for the timing, means, and locations of your promotion.**

- Promote two weeks before the event.
- Backwards plan to allow plenty of time for promotion.
- Promotion should build – start out with some small items and add to them until 2--3 days before the program.
- Put publicity in places where it will be seen.

When promoting ...

- Stress why people should come.
- Focus on the potential guest –put the ball in their court.
- Use action verbs.
- Establish an identity for the program.
- Remember truth in advertising –don't mislead.

Things that make promotion material effective

- Focus on 1 main feature, not 4 or 5. Remember the KISS rule (Keep It Short and Simple).
- Make the right hand side heavier than left.
- Use photos.
- Consistent ads –weekly in same format, use of same logo and theme.
- Group small ads together instead of alone.

Much time and planning goes into programming, but so often the results are lackluster. The idea is there, but the advertising missed the boat (and the audience). Therefore it is essential to have a well-planned promotion scheme.