

PUBLICITY TIPS

Publicity is an important part of any organization. Without the proper publicity, the organization's goals to raise money, to attract new members, or to provide a program, or service, will not be met. Therefore, for your organization's promotion to bring results, careful thought and planning should be put into your campaign.

The most effective publicity allows the reader to grasp all the important facts of the program quickly. Accordingly, promotional materials should bear a clearly printed message that is designed to evoke a response from the viewer. They do not necessarily have to be extremely artistic, but your message should be clear and understandable to the reader.

Before beginning your publicity campaign, certain topics should be discussed.

1. **Budget:** How much can you spend? Is this figure realistic? Are there any hidden costs? Always complete a budget in advance.
2. **Audience:** Who do you want to reach, and what is the best way? Is there a pre-selected market available? Take into account age groups, your audience's likes/ dislikes, career fields, etc. Publicizing something for professors or non-students may be an entirely different task than publicizing an event for students.
3. **Information:** Make sure your campaign materials contain all of the appropriate information (who, what, when, where, and why). It is best to publicize the aspect of your program that people have heard of, or to which they can relate.
4. **Resources:** What are your resources? People, talent, materials, etc.
5. **Location:** Where will your materials get the most attention? Choose high traffic areas and give thought to placing your advertisement in different/unusual places. Be Creative!
6. **Schedule:** How much time do you have? What deadlines must be met? The optimum time to begin advertising an event is 2-3 weeks before it is going to happen. Write up a calendar with deadlines to keep track. Be realistic.

Once you have thoroughly discussed the above topics, your publicity campaign should be ready to take off. All that is needed is the appropriate medium. Below is a list of various types of media that will help you formulate a successful publicity push.

TYPES OF MEDIA

I. **Word of Mouth:** Probably the best medium of all is word of mouth. Once you have put together a publicity committee, it must sell your event to the public. If everyone talks up the event in classes, parties, and cafeterias, people will become interested. GET PEOPLE TALKING, AND INTEREST WILL SPREAD.

II. **Newspaper:**

A. Most newspapers have an “events column” and will advertise your event for free (e.g. the El Don newspaper). For information about procedures and deadlines, contact the paper’s editor. A listing of regional newspapers can be found in the yellow pages.

B. **Press Releases:**

A *press release* is rarely more than one page in length and is a proposed news article written by you, the source. Only essential information should be covered. Your press release may be edited before being printed (see sample press release on page 5).

Press Release Guidelines:

- ❖ **Identification:** If you don’t have letterhead, make sure your organization, address, and phone number are included in the upper left-hand corner of the page.
- ❖ **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.”
- ❖ **Headline:** A brief, one-line summary of the release that appears just above the body of the release.
- ❖ **Copy/Body:** Copy should be straight news style with an informational sentence in the first paragraph including: Who, what, when, where, and why. Include the contact 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.

III. **Website:**

A school or organization website is a popular medium for reaching a large audience easily, and quickly. Social Websites are a valuable resource available to use for publicity, setting up e-vites, etc. It is important to make sure you comply with your school’s and/or organization’s regulations/by-laws regarding publicity, and specify who is permitted to attend the event, etc.

If your group does not have a website, find out if there is an online venue for advertising your group's event through the school Website, or a specific department Website (e.g. Santa Ana College, Office of Student Life, Student Activities Dept. Website/Clubs and Organizations). It is important to create a flyer and/or a press release for the Website, including contact information for those who may need additional information. At Santa Ana College, all flyers used for advertising events (and press releases) must be approved by the Student Life Office staff.

IV. Radio:

Public service announcements (PSA's) are about programs and events in the community. A PSA cannot sell anything or promote a profit-making enterprise. It is an attention grabber; people usually remember what they hear. You can follow the same format as with a press release, but include the time it takes to read your PSA: it should be 10, 20, 30, or 60 seconds in length. It should be sent to the radio station at least two days in advance of the PSA being aired.

V. Traditional Promotion:

- A. Posters
- B. Flyers
- C. Banners
- D. Showcase displays in campus buildings
- E. Marquee

VI. Publicity Ideas:

- Buttons
- Skits/Stunts/with costumes
- Logos
- Curiosity teasers (sneak previews, clues to an event (e.g. "Josh is coming"))
- Bumper Stickers
- T-Shirts (worn in advance of event)
- Balloons
- Sandwich boards (for people and pets!)
- Table tents
- Doorknob signs
- Banners on cars / Painted car windows (personal cars only!!)
- Body painting
- Church bulletins
- Paper hats

- Academic Program competition
- Phone-a-Thon (call people from a directory)
- Pass out free tickets on campus
- Announcements sent to faculty/staff/relevant groups

Publicity Ideas Needing Special Approval at SAC:

- Announcements in eateries and classrooms on campus
- Door to Door
- Half-time presentation
- Paper footprints /arrows leading people to the event
- Placemats (on trays – given to food services dept.-needs special approval)

CAMPUS POLICIES

1. All flyers/banners to be posted on campus must be approved and stamped by the Student Activities Office. Save time and have this done **before** printing.
2. See the RSCCD policy on locations available on campus for hanging banners. Copies of the SAC publicity policy are available in the Office of Student Life (U-121-A). Banners may not be hung on parking lot walls, outside on building walls, bathroom walls or mirrors, or taped to sidewalks.
3. Only post flyers in designated areas: stapling works the best. Be sure not to tape flyers to glass or painted surfaces, or post on departmental or faculty bulletin boards. If posted in these areas, your flyers will be removed.
4. Flyers may not be left on car windshields in parking lots on Santa Ana College's campus.
5. For further information on posting flyers and handling banners, contact the Office of Student Life/Student Activities in U-121-A, or refer to the publicity regulations handout.

Source: Dean of Students Office – California State University Fullerton (09/99)
 Revised: 07/2011 – Santa Ana College /LM

SAMPLE PRESS RELEASE

**SANTA ANA COLLEGE
1530 W. 17th Street
Santa Ana, CA. 92706**

Contact: Joe Schmo
(714) 564-6000

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Associated Student Government donates scholarships to charity

Month/Day/Year – Santa Ana College’s Associated Student Government (ASG) donated \$5000 in scholarships to five needy children today, during an awards banquet at Centennial Park. Upon receipt of the scholarships, the children of ***The Future is Ours*** non-profit organization made a pledge to attend college after graduating from high school.

The charitable contribution arose from the desire to decrease the number of high school dropouts recently noted in national statistics. Over 11 percent of adolescents attending California public high schools drop out and never go back to school or attend college.

“We awarded the scholarships to children who wrote an essay describing their future,” said Mary Bonilla, ASG President. “The college and foundation made a commitment to assist them as much as we can with staying in school, getting involved and fulfilling their expectations.”

For more information, please contact Santa Ana College at (714) 564-6000, or The Future is Ours Foundation at 1-800-ITSMINE.