

Doing Effective Publicity



Step#1: Define the Purpose of the Organization

- ◆ What and why is the organization doing what it is doing?
- ◆ What is the reason for its existence?
- ◆ Why are you programming?
- ◆ If you understand your purpose, the purpose of the organization or group that you serve, you will be able to more effectively define your audience, communicate with them, and interest them in your programs or projects.

Step#2: Develop Project Goals

- ◆ Make your goals specific.
- ◆ What end results do you expect to achieve?
- ◆ To whom is the event directed?
- ◆ What type of program is to be publicized?
- ◆ Your objective should be feasible and measurable.

Step#3 Identify the Audience

- ◆ What group do you hope to involve in the proposed event or program? That will tell you how and where to place your publicity?
- ◆ Strategies will vary according to your intended audience.
- ◆ Publicity campaigns may be directed to political groups, age groups, alumni, service organizations, business groups, social groups, school, religious and athletic groups.

Step#4 Identify Resources

- ◆ If you invest the time to identify resources it will save you a great deal of time, effort, money and frustration, in the long run.
- ◆ People with special expertise should be sought out for help and advice.
- ◆ A possible list of campus resources might include:

Graphics Department	Art Students and Faculty
Campus News	Audio/Visual Department
Communication/Speech Departments	Campus Radio Station
Photography Department	Campus Printing
Purchasing Agent for Campus	Photography Club
Calendar through Union	Public Relations Staff
Library	Student Activities
- ◆ Some off-campus/Community Resources might be:

Chamber of Commerce	Merchants
State/Local Governments and Agencies	Volunteer Organizations
Parks and Recreations Department	Retired Service Volunteers Organization
Professional Public Relations Firms	Printers

Step#5 Use the Brainstorming Process

- ◆ Use “brainstorming” to generate ideas and to apply your imagination to specific tasks.
- ◆ Examine and list the “best” projects and ideas that result from your brainstorming.
- ◆ Ask which method or combination of methods would yield the most effective publicity for the time, energy and money invested.

Step#6 Develop a Publicity Campaign

- ◆ Develop a checklist, listing the tasks that need to be accomplished and the time schedule for their completion. Be thorough.
- ◆ Develop a theme, a philosophy or a feeling to focus, guide and coordinate all of your efforts.
- ◆ Get a logo, a style of lettering or a color scheme to plan around.

- ◆ Try to develop professional looking advertising.
- ◆ Make specific assignments and give appropriate direction to the members of your committee.

Step#7 Carry Out Your Campaign

- ◆ Evenly distribute the workload – make everyone feel like a part of the process.
- ◆ Write out task lists for each person, completion dates, and any helpful information. Provide assistance to make their jobs from becoming frustrating.
- ◆ Be willing to alter your plans as needed.

Step#8 Evaluate

- ◆ Evaluate what went wrong, what went right, and make recommendations for change and improvement.
- ◆ Develop a simple form and use it to record your successes and errors – so that the people that follow you can benefit from your experiences.



The Contents of Publicity:

Name of Event
Date
Place
Time
Admission Price (if any)
Sponsoring Organization

When to Publicize:

At least four to five days in advance for most events.
A week to three weeks in advance for special events.
Saturate with publicity as the date draws close.

Ideas:

There are many ways to communicate. With a little creativity almost any method can be used effectively. Combine methods. Do things differently – don't limit yourself. Surprise people.

If you're having a movie or a play, have people dressed in costumes from that movie or play, go through the Hall or through the cafeteria greeting and inviting people. Have someone in a sandwich board walk through both places, or around campus. Play the soundtrack in the cafeteria, or in the lobby of your Hall. Get it put up on the Marquis at a local theatre. Make posters, table tents, draw on balloons, send personalized invitations...whatever will best get people's attention.

Anything used too often is boring and loses its original appeal. It takes more effort to vary your methods, but it's fun and it's worth it.

Trust yourself. Draw from your own experiences. What is attractive to you?

POSTERS

Posters are an art form – but it DOES NOT take a great deal of artistic ability to make good, effective posters.

Here are some observations about posters:

COLORS

Any poster can be made more effective by the use of colors if you follow these rules:

- ◆ Use basic colors for lettering – they're easier to remember. Accent them with brighter colors.
- ◆ Avoid the use of RED in limited light.
- ◆ Be aware of color connotations:
 - Black: death, boring, authority, essence, heavy
 - Green: Growing, fresh, soothing, money, healing, vivid, integrating

 - Basic: Brown: earth, warm, fall, soft, basic, dull
 - Purple: passion, right, solemn, royal, noble, playful
 - Blue: cold, lively, safe, cool, relaxed, peaceful, cheerful

Accent: Yellow: sun, bright, warm
Orange: jarring, stimulating, cheerful
Red: life, anger, stop, fire, attention, excitement, activity

AVOID USING MORE THAN 3 COLORS ON ANY ONE POSTER!

GRAPHICS

- ◆ Words depersonalize. Figures of people personalize. Even the simplest stick figures are sufficient for people to build a human being around.
- ◆ Graphics are generative. Graphics stretch us; they suggest and evoke ideas; they raise questions and they create alternatives in our minds. Graphics link people into the richness of real situations.
- ◆ Words box people's thinking in and tend to block the seeing of relationships. Figures tend to expand people's thinking and encourage people to interrelate experiences. (They make it easier for people to see themselves in the picture.)
- ◆ Graphics are sneaky. Pictures sneak around internal psychological defenses set up to block unwanted verbal input.

- ◆ Visual Aids (symbols, figures, pictures, etc.) increase recall ability.
 - Graphic displays are memory hooks; they enable us to let go of an idea, knowing we can get back to it when we want to.
 - People can hold 5 to 9 items in their short-term memory at one time. Avoid the threshold of confusion.

- ◆ Don't get too wordy. People are tired of reading all the time.

- ◆ Boxes or borders can be drawn around important information to highlight it.

- ◆ Avoid overuse of capital letters. THIS IS HARDER TO READ than this is.

- ◆ Use creative lettering. You don't have to be gifted. Make basic letters and then jazz them up. Use a straight edged ruler as a bottom guide to make your freehand letters cleaner and more orderly – or use a curved edge to make your letters curve evenly.

- ◆ For table tents, brochures and printed posters use Photocopy Art.
 - Use ads from newspapers, the movie catalogs your Hall Director or government have or go to your school newspaper and see if they will let you use, borrow (anything) their cut out books.
 - Combine photocopied pictures with rub on letters for professional looking advertisements.
 - Have transparencies made of cartoons, or any pictures, borders, etc., you can find. You can blow them up with an overhead projector and trace them to make large posters or bulletin boards.

- ◆ Things to consider:
 - The way you advertise reflects the way you think about what you're doing.
 - Draw from your own experience-what is attractive to you in advertisements?
 - Look at the ads in magazines, on radio and on TV, how do they work?

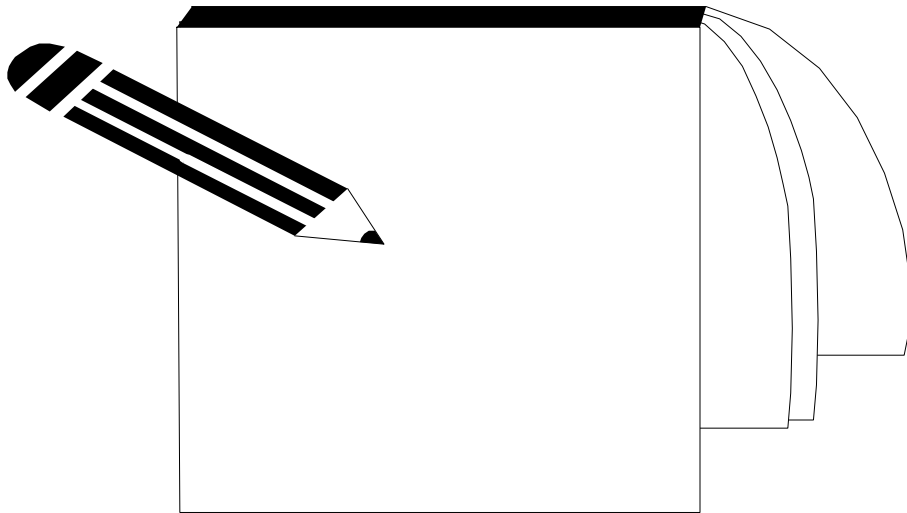
- ◆ Visual material is much more economical in the volume of information that can be conveyed. Graphics give us something to focus on, it reduces the bulk of linear information to a form that can have impact and clarity for the group.

- ◆ Visual material makes it easier for people to see themselves in others "shoes." It makes it easier for people to picture themselves engaging in the activity or program pictured. It can help them picture, for themselves, the kind of benefits or knowledge they might receive as a result of the program or activity.

- ◆ It takes a little more time and planning, but it's worth it for special occasions, or for bulletin boards. If you dress up your signs they'll be noticed more, they'll stay up longer and they will have a positive effect on the campus or Residence Hall living environment.
- ◆ Decide what you want to convey before you make your posters. Pay more attention to the appropriateness of your publicity. Your methods have to be congruent with what you are trying to do. Any incongruence will be noted subconsciously and will be unattractive to you even if you are not consciously aware of it.

The material in this booklet is from:

Ray C. Meyers, Creative Publicity. A paper presented to the Association of College Unions-International, March 1980.



A New Twist to Standard Promotional Techniques and Some Ideas You May Have Never Thought of

You have a terrific season of programs lined up. You want to bring a crowd in but you're afraid a poster might not be enough. Well, have you tried...

During some other programs on campus, preview a film or play a record of the group that will be playing on campus.

Use buttons to advertise a program or series. Sell buttons as tickets and admission to an event. Sell weeks in advance to expose the event to campus.

Bumper stickers-silk-screened. Slogans, program names, etc.

Create a core group of individuals who have information about the project who will then speak to campus groups. This immediate contact in which questions can be answered is more time consuming, but often the most productive, i.e., recruiting for volunteer programs.

Print up colorful bookmarks with advertising about a service available (i.e. draft counseling) or a series (concerts or films).

Make table tents of advertising to place in eating areas and reading lounges around campus.

Classroom blackboards can be used to advertise upcoming events.

Contact bookstores to have displays of records or books by individuals coming to campus to speak or perform.

Use large surplus weather balloons with advertising on them to create interest in an area or a display.

The campus newspaper can be one of your best forms of advertising both from ads that you purchase and also feature important to develop a good working relationship with the newspaper staff. Possible incentives may be in the form of a few well-placed free tickets for events you would like reviewed.

Use creative videotape commercials played around the clock on monitors.

Put large signs and banners on automobiles and park them in prime locations in parking lots on campus.

Have an art student do a large chalk poster on a sidewalk at a prime time in the day so that there can be an interchange visually and also between the artist and interested students. Or have a chalk-in for everyone-just provide free chalk-be sure that it can be easily removed.

Create satellite ticket booths around campus.

Involve committee members or theatre students by having them "in costume" passing out information about the event. Or ask to use their costumes (be sure to clean them when done so you can do it again).

Paste contact paper footprints on the sidewalks with information on the specific event or place the footprints in such a manner that they lead to the event area itself. You could have these slogans printed up as you would bumper stickers and stick them on the

sidewalks. These could also be chalked on the sidewalk. Be sure the chalk is easily removed with water. Test it before you start.

Utilize areas on construction fences for poster or have a “paint in.” Attach used plywood to chain link. Ask the contractor to do it for you.

Use display cases to publicize a program or series of programs.

Realizing that some posters will become wall decorations in student apartments make the rounds several times before the event to hang and re-hang posters to ensure adequate exposure of publicity.

Contact your machine vendors and staple some free tickets to some packets of potato chips and have them distributed throughout campus. This creates interest and talk and you may get a news story out of it.

Set up a tape recorder or record player in a specific area and play upcoming work of an artist who will be appearing on your campus soon. Also include an appropriate display while records are being played.

Have a lucky ticket drawing at major athletic events. Give out tickets to future games or concerts in conjunction with hall time activities.

Use sandwich boards to publicize the events. Hang them on people who will walk around campus.

Obtain empty drug capsules and stuff them with messages and slogans and spread them around campus.

Sky writing. It may be possible to rent a skywriter and publicize big annual events in the campus community.

Give out free tickets to upcoming events with purchase of records of that artist at local record stores.

Make the event publicity a living thing that carries through the theme of the event, such as people in costume parading through campus prior to a Renaissance Fair.

Be sure to leaflet all lines on campus. Registration lines, food lines, theatre ticket lines, lines to get into the bookstore, and lines to get into lines.

Have special fortune cookies made up with information regarding upcoming events.

Ladies room journal. A weekly newsletter obtaining information about upcoming campus events that is placed on the back of ladies restroom doors.

Be sure to advertise through on and off campus housing in the restrooms especially if they are communal restrooms in the lounges. Check with housing officials before posting.

Co-sponsor programs with other campus groups as this will enable you to make use of the other group’s manpower and will increase the possibilities of greater dissemination of information for your specific event.

Give away posters or book covers in advance of an event or series of events, in place of calendars.

Have posters printed up with yearly or semester activities printed on them. Give them away by having local businesses purchase the ad space. Sell for 10 cents and generate revenue.

For a specific event such as Culture Week, ask the food service to feature a specific kind of food item to publicize your event.

Pocket Calendar-Have a calendar of upcoming events printed on cards with the academic year calendar printed on the other side. The event side would include categories such as athletics, cultural events, films, and concerts.

Ste up a call-in taped calendar. Publicize a phone number that could be called night or day containing a recorded message of current events, times, where to get tickets, etc. This tape would be changed as events change and would provide a great service to the community.

Inserts in campus newspapers and local newspapers. Season subscription announcements or campus big event announcements could be printed on newspaper stock and inserted in local and campus newspapers.

For the last minute emergency kind of publicity a phone-a-thon. Call your friends and ask them to call their friends to publicize concerts, or a play that needs attendance.

Check with your bookstore to have semester calendars or major events publicized through matchbook covers, pencils, bookmarks, book covers, etc. This need not be limited to calendared events but publicity about joining campus organizations, recruiting people for student government, publicizing a specific lecture, film or concert series. On-going programs from year to year will make these materials reusable. Match-book covers, pencils or bookmarks are items that can be sold from year to year, therefore, it is important to ensure that the information printed on the material is also salvageable from year to year.

Placemats in your dining and eating areas can focus on a series (football, theatre season, film series, etc.) or a one-time event (big concert, cultural week, Renaissance Fair). They are cheap and can double as poster, leaflet, or mailer.

Skits can always be used as a double program and publicity. Find a way to draw the theatre arts students or your own friends into extemporaneous “happenings” and while the crowd forms, pass out those leaflets and spread the word.

Body painting in the most traveled areas of the union or central quad of the campus will always attract attention. Have guys paint gals and vice versa. Let the passers by join in and inform them they must pain a keyword on the body. Of course the key word fits the program you are pushing for such as: B and R (Baidorf and Rodney), Glenn, America, Engles, or whatever you’re pushing.

Newspaper supplements are sometimes expensive but your campus or local community newspaper just might stick one in the middle of its next issue for free. If not, then get a gang of people to head them off at the pass (or at the campus newsstand until early in the morning) and stuff them yourselves. Use leaflets, brochures or the weekly calendar of events, and if you don’t have a weekly calendar of events, start one. Have each program area kick in a few bucks to print a calendar or contract with the newspaper to have one printed each week.

Under doors in the dorms. The four o’clock phantom strikes the local *dormy* scene with a leaflet (poster, brochure, etc.) under each door. If the resident doesn’t dig the message he can use it as a doormat.

Use another program’s master of ceremonies to announce your upcoming event.

For series (film speakers, etc.) have a few well placed posters whose general format remains the same while the program information may change from event to event. Be sure to change colors for the programs insertion as well.

Use a frame as life size posters, 3'X5' or there abouts seems like good size that would give your graphic artist a good surface to work with. Paint both sides and place them on well-traveled paths. Good graphics might encourage the "owers that be" to let them stay.

Get local businesses to publicize or subsidize your program by giving them plays during breaks in the program. Again be careful of campus regulations preventing commercial activities on college property.

Develop a news column in your student newspaper covering the week's events. Focus in on one or two programs that would appeal to the general campus.

Use odd shaped posters; triangle, hexagons, ovals, etc.

If you have a standard type poster-making machine, spray paint or silkscreen the poster board before overprinting them with the message. Integrate the artwork with the printed message to achieve uniqueness.

Paint windows and glass doors with upcoming even information or graphics to emphasize a program. Easily removable substances are quick to find at the hardware store. Try paintings at different places. Be sure to clean it off when the program is over.

Rent an animal, an elephant, a tiger-and walk it around campus with publicity about an event.

Make up book covers with publicity on them.

Take out advertisements in your student directory outlining upcoming events during the semester or the year.

Go see your local bus company and see if you can put advertising either inside or on the outside of the bus...or better yet; try for both.

If you have some campus wooden bus stop benches repaint them every month or so with advertising about campus programs. Don't forget to put out wet paint signs.

Set up a closed circuit TV system with four or five campus outlets that would contain a campus calendar.

An inexpensive way to make banners is by using mattress cover material.

Print up some paper plates with your advertising and donate them to your food service...or better still work with them and ask them to donate the plates.

Use the back of elevator doors to post on. You sure have a captive audience.

