

Leadersheet

Publicity Tips

Publicity is an intrinsic 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 publicity 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.

Initial Budget

Before beginning your publicity campaign, the following should be discussed:

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

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

Types of Media

- **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.
- **Campus Publications**
The Siskiyou newspaper contains a weekly calendar that you can list your event at no cost. The Siskiyou may also print an article about your event if time and space allow it. The calendars on the SOU home page and the SAL home page, and the monitors in the SU are all available to publicize your event for free.

Press Releases

Another way to get your information out is a press release. Rarely more than one page in length, it is a proposed news article written by you, the source. Only essential information should be covered in the article. Your press release may be edited by the publisher before being printed.

Press Release Guideline:

1. **Identification:** If you don't have a letterhead, make sure your organization, address and 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:** Write a brief, one line summary of the release that appears just above the body of the release.
4. **Copy:** Copy 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.

Traditional Promotion

- **Posters**
Most buildings around SOU have guidelines for posters that must be followed. Usually these are simple rules, such as that no student publicity can be placed on departmental boards. Other boards are typically open for you to post on.
- **Flyers**
Using a whole sheet per flyer can make your publicity difficult to hand out to people around campus. If you can say what you need in a smaller space and then print these flyers 4-8 per page, these are much easier to fit in a hand or a pocket.
- **Reserved tables in the SU or the SU courtyard**
Setting up a table to distribute information about your event or to sell tickets or other merchandise is available for no charge, but typically only to registered student groups. If you are not representing a registered group, there may be additional fees for the setup costs of the tables or equipment you need.
- **Table tents in Elmo's**
These small signs on the tables in Elmo's are reserved through Student Publicity, and a small fee is attached to reserving them.
- **Residence Halls**
There is no charge for publicity in the residence halls, but you may not distribute this publicity yourself. Your materials will have to be delivered to the Housing Office that will screen the materials before distributing them to RAs. RAs themselves then may also screen the publicity before posting it. Be sure that your signs or posters are well made, clear and informative and there should be no difficulties.

Unconventional Publicity Ideas

Use your imagination! Many unconventional ideas often gather more attention and get greater response than typical newspapers, posters and signs. For example, one presidential candidate for student government ran a campaign called "Rock Your Campus" and placed ordinary rocks around campus painted red with this slogan. The more unusual your publicity is, the more likely it will get people talking about it.