

Top Tips

Events – Promoting and Marketing Your Club

Introduction

Promoting and marketing can be a highly effective means of attracting more members, volunteers and funding for your club. It can also improve the social aspect of your club and integrate it more fully with the community in which it is based.

Why Promote and Market?

To increase the members participating in sport; increase the number of supports; encourage more volunteers; expand the social side; assist in producing an evidence portfolio to help you recruit a sponsor, encourage private financial donations and/or be considered for grants.

If you want your promotional campaign to succeed, you need to communicate its clear benefits to a clear target group.

Who To Target	What To Tell Them
Your target market needs to be those individuals most able to fulfil your promotional or marketing aims and objectives. Keep in mind that it may be more than one group and, therefore, you might need more than one message.	If you are promoting an open day for young people then the message for parents may be that it will be 'safe'. However, that message is not going to attract an awful lot of young people, so you will need a different one for them. Let your target market know what is in it for them: talk in terms of benefits.
By having a clear image of who you are targeting when producing your promotional material, you stand far more chance of producing something that has impact and sounds really attractive to them.	Focus on only one promotional message at a time – too many competing messages can dilute the proposition and confuse the reader.
Tailor your message to the group that you are trying to attract.	You might decide that your club needs more volunteers. To attract those already interested and participating in the sport, you might talk about helping to provide more opportunities for people to play their sport. Whereas, for those not involved, you may want to emphasise the chance to meet new people and make new friends. Try to match the message to the group.
Sometimes, it may also be more effective to target people indirectly.	You can contact parents via participants or schools to recruit young people for a youth team.

Try small-scale 'test campaigns' and see which targets give the best response

What Kind of Promotion to Use

Different kinds of promotion will be appropriate for different publicity aims.

Type of Promotion	Recommendation
Adverts in Local Press Allows you to reach a relatively wide audience and give you full control of your message.	Maintain a consistent look across all your adverts. The response will increase as readers begin to recognise your adverts. Choose a newspaper that your target audience reads. There are many free newspapers.

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Posters Appropriately positioned posters can be an effective and cheap means of communicating.	Only use pictures that fit with and complement the headline and text and use a clear 'call to action'.
Press Releases and Local Radio Press releases and press information can be a great way to promote your message for a minimal cost.	Ensure you tell an interesting story. Keep your release short and to the point. End the piece with the name and contact details of the writer.
Direct Mail/email Direct mail allows you to target people very specifically – it can be expensive, though, so getting your target market right is key.	Address your reader by name. Be very specific in your 'call to action'. Remember, this is not a formal business letter. There should be a summary of the information you are sending.
Flyers Flyers can be a good way to communicate simple messages – they have the advantage that they are normally given to people or sent to them unrequested and people can hold on to them to refer to the 'call to action'.	As with press adverts and posters, flyers need striking headlines, simple and clear design and pictures that complement the text. Encourage readers to act immediately and offer them a way to do so
Website Keep your website simple and up to date.	Make sure your site is interesting so that it draws the visitor in. Ensure all the important information is clearly displayed or that the links to it are easy to find. Avoid irrelevant and time-consuming graphics. Promote your site on all your own written material.

Events and competitions are specific examples of opportunities which enable you to put into practice the promotional activities listed above e.g. use of local media provides a means of informing people of competition results.

Effective Promotions

Not all promotions are successful; therefore, it is important to track what is effective and what is not, adjusting your approach for next time.

- ❖ Gather information on what works and what doesn't so that you can be clear about how to improve your promotions and build on your successes.
- ❖ Try asking new volunteers and participants which promotion, if any, encouraged them to join.
- ❖ Count responses to promotional campaigns wherever possible and compare and contrast results.
- ❖ Look at your website statistics to find out how many people view each page or which pages are most popular.
- ❖ Use the same style in all your promotional materials, this way your brand will gain recognition.
- ❖ Stick with it!

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Further Information

The runningsports website (www.runningsports.org) has useful resources, including Quick Guides “Promoting and Marketing your Club”, “Effective Communication”, “Managing Events”, “Organising Fixtures and Competitions”, “Fundraising, Grants and Sponsorship”, “Volunteers”, along with other downloadable resources Top Tips, Role Outlines and information on training including workshops and workbooks. Alternatively, telephone the runningsports Hotline on 0800-363373.

Other Organisations worth checking out

Name	Telephone	Website
Chartered Institute of Marketing	01628 427 500	www.cim.co.uk
Sport England	0845 850 8508	http://www.promotingsport.sportengland.org/default.aspx

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