



TOPTIPS

PROMOTING YOUR EVENTS

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Where should we promote?

Firstly, is this a 'ready made' group within which momentum will automatically gather or are we wanting to expand to others? If wanting to expand:

- Firstly, we need to decide who the event is for?
- Where do they go for information?
- Can promotion be done electronically, in hard copy or a combination of both? Email is cheaper but a brochure can be passed around, looked at and mulled over and is more attractive than an email.
- How much promotion can be left to word of mouth?
- Where are the new people coming from?
- What do they read that could be used to market to them (outside magazines, in-house publications etc)? Note: magazine advertising can be very expensive so you need to be sure that the magazine is exactly the right demographic of readers and that your event has something to offer them.
- Would a press release be effective – either to local, national or Christian press? Editorial coverage can often be more effective than actual advertisements.
- If word of mouth is a most effective method of promotion (as it often is with Christian events), how can we assist our advocates? Would a Powerpoint presentation or DVD be helpful to them?
- Do we need to do market research to see what would attract others to come (could be changes to dates, programme, activities, price, etc)?
- Do we have partners that we work with who could help promote the event?
- Is there another event that you could exhibit at to promote your event? Exhibiting can be very expensive so again, be sure that you are reaching a significant number of the relevant audience.

Tracing Promotion Effectiveness

If your event is ongoing or you plan to run future similar events, it is always useful to monitor how effective your promotional avenues are.

- If using advertisements, encourage folks to tell you they saw the ad in the 'so and so' magazine.
- Mark registration forms, given out by different methods, in a different way for each distribution method so as to identify where the registrations came from.
- If you get enquiries from new comers, ask where they heard about the event.
- In your follow-up survey after the event, ask attendees how they first heard about the event.

It will become clear which avenues of advertising are not cost effective.

Brand Images

It is often helpful to develop a brand for your event so that the message is consistently being communicated and becomes familiar. Use the same fonts, colour schemes and even a logo if appropriate on all communications including hard copy, website, Powerpoint presentations etc. This could even flow through to uniforms etc at the event.

Websites

More and more, people are going to the internet to find information for what they are looking for. Details of your event should always be included on a website, However, make sure the event is promoted attractively on the website - some will find out about it via the website. All the information that goes into advertising literature should be on the website along with much more information about the event, who runs it, what people can expect, etc.

Keeping old attendees

If people enjoy an event, they can be the greatest advocates for you in promoting the event to others. However, you need to be sure you are keeping your existing attendees. Some considerations could be:

- How are you improving on the last event?
- What are the good elements that you should keep?
- What new activities, programme elements could you add?
- Have you addressed any challenges and issues that arose at the previous event? (make sure you communicate this if you have)

Advertising Brochure/Registration Forms

Planning

What is it? - you need to consider what you are trying to achieve from the brochure. Is it to get ALL the information to potential attendees including a booking form, is it to entice them to find out more? Is registration manual or online?

Budget - is the next consideration. Is there a budget for this to be designed and printed externally or is it satisfactory to be done in-house and photocopied?

Design - is important to ensure it is attractive to the recipients and will encourage them to attend. It also needs to be easy to follow and include all the relevant information on a timely basis. Who can do this for you? Does the budget allow for an external designer?

Content

Content maybe spread over more than one piece of literature, but the additional distributions cost need to be factored in if this is the case. Information that people will need before an event includes:

Brochure

- Name of event
- Dates and Timing
- Venue and location
- Who is running it?

Other information they may need

- What to bring, inc personal items, bedding, sports equipment
- Travel instructions, including what to do upon arrival
- Any extra programme information that needs advance notice
- Advice re any particularly risky activities such as wall climbing etc
- Guidelines re parking, smoking, pets, mobile phones, etc
- 'Prewarning' of any offering!
- Discipline procedures
- Details of specialist instructors
- Insurance coverage if appropriate
- How various age groups are catered for
- Leisure time activities

Booking Information required should include:

- Names
- Address
- Email address
- Phone number
- Dates of birth
- churches attended
- special catering needs
- other special needs
- amount being paid
- method of payment

Other information you will need

- Specific medical backgrounds (asthma, medical allergies etc)
- Parent permission for under 18s to:
 - attend (if parents not in attendance)
 - administration of medical procedures (eg epipens)
 - be involved in sports activities, inc specifying any more dangerous ones such as wall climbing