

FOREWORD

Throughout Australia, clubs involved in recreation, sport, arts and culture are managed and serviced by dedicated volunteers. These people give freely of their time and skills to support the range of leisure opportunities available.

However, many of these groups are constantly seeking additional administrative assistance from their members. They often try to identify people within their communities who are able to provide the administration skills necessary for the successful management of the club or organisations.

The Australian Sports Commission recognises that while volunteers are keen to assist their activity develop, they require certain skills and experience to be able to contribute to the administrative tasks.

The Volunteer Involvement Program (VIP) has been developed to assist volunteers by providing a series of courses on club administration and a handbook series on the following topics:

1. Recruitment and retaining volunteers
2. The role of the club secretary
3. Meeting Procedures
4. Marketing and promotion
5. Fund raising and sponsorship
6. Club development and planning
7. Financial Management
8. Event management

While these booklets contain basic information, they are to be used in conjunction with the administration lecture series. Additional reading and further references are listed.

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OVERVIEW OF MARKETING

Marketing is the process of matching up a product or service with people who want to purchase or participate in it. These people are referred to as 'the market'. Marketing is also planned approach to "sell" your goods.

The wide choice of sport and recreational products and services now available means marketing is becoming more and more necessary to ensure club survival. It is through marketing plans that clubs try to attract, increase and retain members and volunteers.

WHO CARRIES OUT THE MARKETING?

Marketing may appear to be a daunting task that should be left to the experts and professionals, but if you treat it as a series of steps there is no reason why your club could not implement its own marketing plan. It is important to be sure that everyone who is involved is clear of the steps and the particular order in which they must be done. A team approach is recommended. This reduces stress levels and means that there is good support throughout the process. One individual may be appointed with the overall responsibility to implement the marketing plan. In many sports clubs this person is called the **Development Officer**. As needs of people change, the range of options increase, each club should be constantly assessing itself to find out how it must change to ensure it still has a product or service with the related market.

BASIC MARKETING PRINCIPLES

DEFINING THE PRODUCT/SERVICE

Before you can undertake any marketing you need to identify and know the product or service you are offering. What is the business you are involved in?

For some clubs this may be difficult to identify. Think about the particular benefits and attractions of participating in your activity:

Is it friendship – are you in the business of providing social opportunities?

Do you offer professional coaching?

Be very specific about what the product is that you want to market.

SETTING OBJECTIVES

You must have a clear idea of what you are trying to achieve through marketing. Do you want to increase the numbers playing at your club or do you want to identify individuals that will develop into world champions, i.e. do you want your club to be recognised as the 'Wallabies' of tiddlywinks? Your decisions will have a major impact on the type of marketing plan you produce.

Your objectives might be to:

- increase overall participation in the activity
- increase overall participation in physical recreation
- increase overall participation in competitive sport
- increase participation by certain targeted groups, e.g. age groups, regions
- increase membership of officials, administrators/affiliated clubs
- attract outside financial support
- expand your range of activities
- increase community involvement

IDENTIFYING THE TARGET GROUPS

You can take the shot gun approach – load the rifle and aim in the general direction hoping that people will be “hit” by the shot and be interested enough to check up on your activity. However, it is much easier to target the audience or groups that you want to reach and focus your program directly at them.

Target groups are made up of people who share some common factors. They may be grouped according to:

gender, location – town or suburb, occupation, age grouping, educational background, other leisure interests, marital status race or age of children.

To identify your target group look at your own club membership and think of the common factors they share. What are their interests, backgrounds, age, etc.

Why do these people participate in your club’s activities? If you are not sure of the answers to these questions, contact some of your club members and talk to them about it. A good idea is to hand them a same questionnaire to each club member and ask them to fill it in. This questionnaire can also provide demographic information for sponsors etc.

Club Questionnaire (Example)

Questionnaire No:

The following questions are being asked to help your club committee in developing sponsorship proposals, planning new club programmes, and the promoting of to the community.

Please co-operate by completing it now and returning it before you leave the club tonight.

1. Male/Female
2. Age Group
5-10 11-15 16-20 21-30 31-40 41-50
51-60 over 61
3. Average Income
Living at home/still at school
Unemployed
0-\$10 000, etc.
4. Highest educational level obtained.
5. If working state occupation, position held at present and employer.
6. What activities would you like more of?
7. Why did you join the club?
8. Has your reason for joining been fulfilled?
9. What facilities would you like added/improved on?

From this base information you are ready to formulate an action plan or strategy from which promotion and publicity will follow.

DEVELOPING THE STRATEGY

If your potential audience is mothers of pre-schoolers for a gymnastics program you need to be able to reach them. Consider the following: do they live in your area, do they read the local newspaper, would they see a poster at the supermarket, do they listen to a particular radio station, are they at home, will a letter box drop reach them?

Be aware of what is important to each group and tailor your approach. You should also think about the price of your product/service (what are your charges to members) and the place that you are located. For example, students and unemployed people may be concerned about money so will not take part in activities that are costly or are so far away from home that they cannot afford the transport to get there.

Keep these things in mind when you select your target group. What are the issues that will influence your group's participation?

COMPILING THE MARKETING PLAN

Once you have worked out your marketing strategy you should prepare a plan that outlines the steps you intend taking to implement the strategy. This plan will present a summary of your marketing objectives, a description of your target market and of the product/service you are selling to this market and finally the method by which you intend targeting this market.

This plan provides a planning tool which you and other administrators can return to for direction and to ensure your club is meeting its objectives.

Example:

Objective:	To get more older women involved in the club
Target market:	Elderly women in council flats or at home
Product/Service:	Women's weekday morning craft club
Targeting Strategy:	Information delivered through meals on wheels drivers, community service officers at city councils, district health nurses, etc.

Note: Planning and implementing a marketing and promotion strategy will require financial outlay. Ensure that this plan is incorporated into the club's annual plan and budget.

PROMOTION

A major component of the marketing strategy is promotion. This is the process by which the product or service is brought to the attention of the “market”. There are many forms of promotion, from purchasing material for visual displays to paying for advertising space in the local paper. It is critical that the promotion suits the product or service, the market and the stated objectives. Promotion is not just an advertising campaign it is creating a positive general public awareness of your organisation and its activities.

Traditionally most clubs do not have marketing or promotion officers. By default, any marketing and promotion may fall to the publicity officer.

THE PROMOTER

Anyone who is willing to learn the principles of marketing and has been provided with clear objectives and a target audience can undertake the promotion for their activities.

If your club is serious about marketing themselves, then it would be advisable to create a long-term position for this sole purpose.

PROMOTION TASKS

To be able to conduct a successful promotional campaign you must:

1. Developing the right message for the target audience. What can you say that attracts people to the club? This message must also be backed up with support information which tells the audience where and how they can get involved in your activities.
2. Identify the promotion avenues that you will use to distribute your message. Remember to think of the best medium for your target group.
Example: posters, pamphlets, media, publicity balloons, fun days, stalls, street fairs, public greetings, T-shirts.
3. Create in the message the “tone” that is the most appropriate to persuade your audience to participate.
Example: ordering, tempting, pleading, reasoning, inviting, encouraging, etc.

Always test your ideas. Try them out on your friend, family and other club members initially. If you get a favourable response, test it further, on a sample of the particular audience you are trying to reach.

NOTE: Before starting your promotional campaign be sure that the structures are in place within your club to cope with anticipated results. For example, if a large number of people suddenly apply for membership with your club, are you able to cope with this increase?

Be Prepared.

PUBLICITY

Publicity is one form of promotion. The important difference between publicity and other forms of promotion is that it is not paid for. It appears in story or editorial form in the print media and in the non-commercial portion of radio and television programmes.

Through the establishment of a publicity office's position and a publicity committee your club can raise its public profile. The main avenue to raise your organisation's profile or the attention it is given is by working with and through media. Regular mention and publicity via the media helps to create and maintain an awareness of your activity.

WORKING WITH THE MEDIA

Important things to remember when working with the media are

- Know your subject
- Believe in its appeal
- Know your market
- Be familiar with all media personnel
- Know media requirements for reporting

PRESS RELEASES

When producing a press release follow these guide line:

1. Ensure that the release is typed – double spaced.
2. The information must be topical.
3. Present the news in short, snappy headlines with the main points of interest first.
4. Use simple and easily understood language.
5. Check the media deadlines.
6. Use the correct format, particularly in relation to names.
7. Provide photographs (where applicable).
8. Put the name of the club at the top of the release. The wording “Press Release” needs to also be prominently displayed.
9. Supply name, address and telephone number of a club person to contact for further information.
10. Deliver the release personally or post directly to the relevant reporter.

The ideal media release should answer five questions concerning an event:

- **What** was the event? What happened?
- **Where** did it happen?
- **Who** did it happen to?
- **When** did it happen?
- **Why** did it happen?

NEWSPAPER

Remember newspapers are in the business of supplying news. For clubs the focus of news is the human interest story – “local mother of five won gold at the veteran athletics in Alice Springs”; therefore it is much more advisable to target local papers. Larger papers are only interested in big events. The newspaper is also an avenue for:

Advertising	feature articles	future competitions	
previews	supplements	result columns	interviews
photographs	weekly draws	reports	articles

RADIO

The radio is an excellent avenue for on-the-sport immediate broadcasts. When speaking out on the radio talk in the present tense, and make your most important point first. Radio reports are generally short and brief – you may only have a few minutes to make your point.

Most radio stations have community advertising or notice boards, cancellation services, scoreboard results and talkback programs.

Other mediums for promotions are:

- brochures, newsletters, annual reports
- professional journals and magazines
- public speaking
- displays and demonstrations
- public notice boards
- flyers
- mementoes and photographs
- and, if you are fortunate enough, television

CONCLUSION

There are many more skilled and handy hints that will make you the marketing and promotions expert for your club. Taking a planned approach will ease the process. The information provided within this booklet should start to help you to have a better understanding of these two concepts.

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

The following books referred to the production of this manual.

Hilary Commission for Recreation and Sport, *Club Administration Manual*, Wellington, 1991.

Howard, D. R., and Crompton, J. L., *Financing, managing and Marketing Recreation and Park Resources*, William Brown, Iowa, U.S.A. 1983.

Kotter, P., *Marketing for Non Profit Organisations*, Prentice-Hall, New Jersey, U.S.A., 1982.

The assistance of the Hilary Commission, New Zealand, is acknowledged in the production of this booklet.