

Getting Your Organisation Noticed

Unless you tell people about your organisation, they can't know about it. This seems obvious but is often forgotten, particularly when an organisation has been running for some time. Information needs to be conveyed regularly so, if you haven't considered how you get your message across for a while, perhaps it is time to have another look at what methods you are already using and how it could be improved.

General Principles

Try to create a clear publicity identity and stick to it! This could mean using a particular colour scheme, creating a logo, perhaps using a particular type face. By doing this, you give the impression of professionalism and make your organisation easily recognisable.

Ensure your information is accessible to all who might be interested in it. Why not think about offering information in large print or other languages etc.

Please remember that charity law states that all of a charity's publications must display the official name of the registered charity, the country in which it is registered and the charity number (why not put it as a footer on all documents).

Keep information relevant to the audience you want the information to reach and try to keep information as succinct as possible.

Consider setting up ways of monitoring how people hear about your organisation. You can use this information to plan further publicity distribution.

Potential Audiences You Might Want to Reach

These are some of the audiences you might want to reach. For each audience, think about where they might get information and what they might take notice of.

1. People already using your services

- This group will be able to access information directly from your organisation but how will you get things across?
 - Displays, leaflets, posters, word of mouth.
- This group already know who you are so don't waste time explaining it.
- Information that it might be useful to convey might include: Times and places of meetings/ events; All the different things your organisation does (people may not know all you do); Success stories; Introductions to new staff; Other related sources of information they might be interested in; Interesting statistics about how the organisation is performing

2. General public (raising profile and gaining support)

- This group of people don't necessarily know anything about you - make sure you describe your organisation clearly and concisely.
- You might give your message in local press, leaflets, posters, word of mouth.
- Focus on what you are trying to get across:
 - Are you just informing people that you are around? - if so, include what you do and where you meet.

- Are you trying to lobby for support - if so, what can people do to get involved and support you?
- Are you wanting to inform people of a specific success or forthcoming event? - don't forget to include a bit of background

3. People who may want to use the service you provide but do not already

- Do you need to use the same method as for the general public, or are there places that you might find many potential users of your service? Eg. A service supporting single mothers - advertise in play groups etc.
- People might find out by referrals, word of mouth, leaflets, posters,
- Information you might want to convey may include the services you offer, how these services can be of benefit, when and where you meet.

4. Funders

- There are quite a few different ways funders could find out about you. Unless you apply to them directly they are unlikely to give you money.
- Funders want proof you can deliver a good service with their money.
- You might want to include publicity material like leaflets in applications. You could take presentations to potential funders like borough councils. The general public might offer some financial support (you never know who will read what) but this is highly unlikely.

5. Potential New Volunteers or Trustees

- Getting people to commit time and energy to your organisation is best done face to face and often people you know are the best source of volunteers and trustees.
 - Ask if anyone knows someone who might be interested in an, "exciting role" with an organisation that "really makes a difference".
- If you are advertising, focus on what these people would want to know:
 - Background info; How they will be making a difference by volunteering; That they will be treated well (expenses etc).

Word of Mouth

This is included as a separate heading because it is one of the best ways of getting positive interest in your organisation. It's FREE and it's a powerful tool.

Recommendations from people you trust positively influence the listeners. Personal contact also gives people a chance to ask questions and find out more. **Encourage people who believe in your organisation to champion it.**

You could also encourage people who have had a positive experience of using your service to talk to people they think might benefit from it (not always appropriate - so use your judgement). You could invite people who are able to refer potential users to visit your organisation so they can see the work that you do first hand.

Other Methods - Things You Should Think About With Them and What Purpose They Might Be Useful For

Newsletters to Members and Stake Holders - Provide a way of getting information across to people who generally already know a bit about your organisation. They

can be created really cheaply or (if you are lucky enough to have some money) in a more flashy way. See the previous page for information on the sort of information to include for this group. Keep it relatively short and relevant.

Leaflets - Again, leaflets can be produced as cheaply or expensively as you want. Try to make them eye catching and try not to bombard people with too much information. Keep the information relevant to the audience you are aiming at. Plan your distribution carefully.

Posters - Make them striking. Keep information to the minimum possible.

Displays - Will they be displayed in your premises or can you put a temporary display in other places (eg. Local church/library/community centre) Make it attractive so that people will stop and look. Include pictures and text. Mount items to make displays neater. Can you include leaflets that people can take away with them?

Local Media - Find out what local media there is in your area - press, radio, websites etc and keep in touch with them, informing them of interesting stories they might want to report on. Find out about "What's On" columns and use them.

Presentations - Create a professional looking power point presentation describing the work your organisation does and using pictures of your organisation in action. Choose someone confident and likable who will be able to answer questions about your organisation should they come up. Practice delivering it succinctly. Describe the impact your organisation has and, where possible, provide evidence like statistics to add weight to your argument. You might also want to use particular success stories that people could relate to. Deliver it to people who could be influential to your organisation like local borough councils. Funding could come from some meetings. Presentations can also be used to gather support. Local churches, Women's Institute and community groups might be the sort of places you could deliver your message.

Contact CVS Hounslow

If you would like help with this or any other issue, get in touch with Clare Sewell, Development Officer at CVS Hounslow who would be happy to help.

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