

HOW TO PROMOTE YOUR SPECIAL EVENT

PUBLICITY GUIDELINES FROM THE OFFICES OF PUBLICATIONS AND PUBLIC RELATIONS

brochures

INFORMATION CHANNEL

radio ads

POSTERS

photography

event marquees

news releases

WVMM-FM

The Swinging Bridge

flyers



mass-mail

THE POWER OF SPECIAL EVENTS

Special events can be powerful, effective means of achieving the objectives of your department or program. A well-planned event can generate awareness, inspire enthusiasm and support, and create momentum. Special events can also be a significant investment of your department's time and financial resources—so it makes sense to also invest in a strategic plan to promote your event and maximize its success. The Offices of Publications and Public Relations provide a variety of resources, within a wide range of budget possibilities, to help you do this. The tips below will help you to begin thinking about your event promotion, and the reverse of this brochure outlines specific publicity options, designed to meet the needs of your event within your available budget. We look forward to working with you!

1. Plan publicity early

The most important rule of promotion planning is to plan ahead. The earlier you begin planning, the more promotional opportunities you will have available to you. Planning ahead also provides the time necessary to produce higher quality promotional materials and minimizes the possibility of error in the production process.

2. Budget ahead

Building a promotional budget into your event ahead of time opens up more possibilities. For example, with a sufficient budget you can: purchase ads for newspapers, magazines, radio or TV; produce a brochure, flyer or poster; send direct mail, etc. While there are several good options for free publicity, generally these methods are not as reliable as paid publicity because they do not allow you to control the timing or content of your message.

3. Define your target audience

Defining the *specific* audience for your event will help determine the best means of reaching them. For example: if your target audience is “students” do you want *all types of students* to come to your event? Or do you want to attract a *specific group of students*, i.e. junior or senior marketing majors? Defining your target audience as specifically as possible will greatly enhance the effectiveness of your promotional strategy.

4. Set (realistic) goals

Be clear about what you want to accomplish with your publicity. For instance: Is the *size* of the audience most important; i.e., do you need to sell a certain number of tickets, or meet a revenue goal? Or is the *type* of audience more important; i.e., are you trying to attract a smaller, more specialized audience? Every event is different, and determining your objectives will help enable you to plan successfully.

5. Develop a strategy

Plan a promotional strategy that will help meet your goals within a realistic budget and time frame. The Offices of Publications and Public Relations can help. To assist you in promoting your campus event, we have listed on the reverse side a variety of publicity options—available through a broad range of venues both on and off campus—that may work well for you. Because audiences and budgets vary by event, we have broken out the options by the following categories:

How to Reach On-Campus Audiences

- Free Publicity
- Publicity Requiring a Budget

How to Reach Off-Campus Audiences

- Free Publicity
- Publicity Requiring a Budget

6. Get Started!

While the options shown on the reverse side provide a good starting point, each event will provide specific publicity opportunities and budget considerations. Please contact either the Public Relations Office at ext. 6027 or the Publications Office at ext. 5381 as early as possible to begin the promotion planning process. While there are many sources of help available on campus to faculty, staff and students who are planning events—to ensure success, it is ultimately the responsibility of the department or individual initiating the event to manage the promotion, budgeting, and implementation of that event.

HOW TO REACH ON-CAMPUS AUDIENCES

Free Publicity

| PUBLICITY | REQUIRED LEAD TIME | CONTACT |
|--|---|--|
| <i>Intercom</i> announcement | Weekly deadline for submission is Wednesday, 10 a.m. for Thursday publication | E-mail announcement to "INTERCOM" e-mailbox on GroupWise. Questions? Contact Suzanne Miller in Public Relations, ext. 7361 |
| <i>Community News</i> announcement | Weekly deadline for submission is 4:30 p.m. on Wednesday for the following Tuesday's edition | E-mail announcement to "COMNEWS" e-mailbox on GroupWise. Questions? Contact Student Programs, ext. 5240 |
| Event "Highlights" brochure; (produced each semester by the PR Office and mailed to all Messiah employees and to 5,000 households in the region) | Every July and November, the PR Office runs an announcement for several weeks in the <i>Intercom</i> inviting faculty and staff to submit information | E-mail announcement to Sherri Minich in the PR Office or contact her at ext. 7326 with questions. |
| Messiah College Information Channel (Channel 6) | At least one week | E-mail announcement to "INFOCHAN" e-mailbox on GroupWise. For more information, contact Campus Events Office, ext. 6009, or visit www.messiah.edu/offices/conferenceservices/information.shtml |
| Messiah College Mass E-Mail | At least 48 hours | Visit www.messiah.edu/massemail |
| <i>The Swinging Bridge</i> , news release | One–two weeks | Via campus mail to the <i>Swinging Bridge</i> or call ext. 5095 |
| WVMM-FM, news release or PSA | One–two weeks | Via campus mail to WVMM or call ext. 6081 |
| Develop a web page on Messiah's website | Three–four weeks | Contact College Webmaster Justin Sentz, ext. 7041 |

HOW TO REACH ON-CAMPUS AUDIENCES

Publicity Requiring a Budget

| PUBLICITY | REQUESTED LEAD TIME* | APPROXIMATE COST* | CONTACT |
|---|---------------------------------------|---|--|
| Posters/Event marquees | Two–four weeks | \$75–\$500+ depending on scope of the project and target audience | <i>Design-intensive:</i> Contact Lynda Bauer Publications Office, ext. 5381 <i>Not design-intensive:</i> Contact College Press, ext. 6030 |
| Flyers | Four weeks | \$75–\$400+ depending on scope of the project and target audience | <i>Design-intensive:</i> Contact Lynda Bauer Publications Office, ext. 5381 <i>Not design-intensive:</i> Contact College Press, ext. 6030 |
| <i>The Swinging Bridge</i> ad | Required Lead Time Two–three weeks | \$100+ depending on the size of the ad | For more information, contact <i>The Swinging Bridge</i> , ext. 5095 |
| Photography— To schedule a <i>professional</i> photographer for your event | Two weeks | \$250 + depending on the event | To schedule, contact Lynda Bauer Publications Office, ext. 5381. |

*Lead times and cost estimates vary depending upon the scope of each project unless otherwise noted.

HOW TO REACH OFF-CAMPUS AUDIENCES

Free Publicity

| PUBLICITY | REQUIRED LEAD TIME | CONTACT |
|--|---|---|
| News releases to local/regional print media | Four–six weeks | Contact Suzanne Miller in the Public Relations Office, ext. 7361 |
| Public Service Announcements (PSAs) to local/regional radio stations | Four–six weeks | Contact Suzanne Miller in the Public Relations Office, ext. 7361 |
| Event "Highlights" brochure; (produced each semester by the PR Office and mailed to all Messiah employees and to 5,000 households in the region) | Every July and November, the PR Office runs an announcement for several weeks in the <i>Intercom</i> inviting faculty and staff to submit information | E-mail announcement to Sherri Minich in the Public Relations Office or contact her at ext. 7326 with questions. |
| Develop a web page on Messiah's website | Three–four weeks | Contact College Webmaster Justin Sentz at ext. 7041 |

HOW TO REACH OFF-CAMPUS AUDIENCES

Publicity Requiring a Budget

| PUBLICITY | REQUESTED LEAD TIME* | APPROXIMATE COST* | CONTACT |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|--|
| Posters | Two–four weeks | \$100–\$500+ <i>Cost consideration: quantity and postage</i> | Contact Lynda Bauer Publications Office, ext. 5381 |
| Flyers | Four weeks | \$75–\$400+ <i>Cost consideration: quantity and postage</i> | Contact Lynda Bauer Publications Office, ext. 5381 |
| Postcards | Four–six weeks | \$100+ <i>Cost consideration: quantity and postage</i> | Contact Lynda Bauer Publications Office, ext. 5381 |
| Brochures | Four–six weeks | \$200+ <i>Cost consideration: quantity and postage</i> | Contact Lynda Bauer Publications Office, ext. 5381 |
| Letters | One–two weeks | Cost of stationery, envelopes and postage will vary by size and postage class of the mailing | Initiate through the Publications Office. Contact Lynda Bauer, ext. 5381 |
| Paid advertising Newspaper/magazine • Radio • TV | Required Lead Time Six–eight weeks | Generally \$1,000+ depending on the scope of the advertising and the media outlets selected | For more information, contact Sherri Minich, ext. 7326 |
| Photography— To schedule a <i>professional</i> photographer for your event | Two weeks | *\$250+ depending on the event | Contact Lynda Bauer Publications Office, ext. 5381 |

*Lead times and cost estimates vary depending upon the scope of each project unless otherwise noted.