

Near Neighbours' Toolkit How to Promote Your Project

Before embarking on your promotional campaign, answer these three questions:

- What is my Message?

You must be clear about what you are trying to communicate. A simple, concise message will have a far greater impact than something complicated and long winded. Likewise, a mixed or diluted message will confuse.

- Who are my Audience?

Define who you want to reach and then use messages that will appeal to those people. Don't use jargon.

- What is the Best and Most Cost Effective Way to reach your Audience?

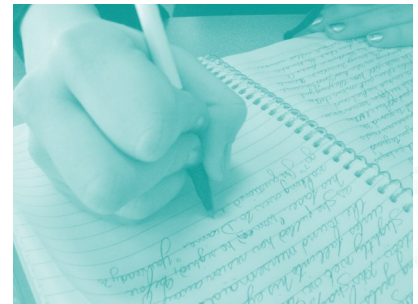
There are many ways to promote your project. With your audience in mind, look for the most cost effective routes to reach that audience. What works for one audience may not work for another, so be prepared to try different avenues and if possible test a method before spending too much time and money on it.

I. Promotional Literature, Direct Marketing

Direct Marketing is getting a bit of bad press these days, because of the amount of 'junk mail' that's landing on our doormats, but don't be put off considering it.

If you have a good database of contacts (users/supporters) who are familiar with your work, then sending a mailshot to them won't be junk mail and is one of the cheapest ways to communicate with them.

If you are considering producing a leaflet about your work then look at getting a designer to help you create the right image for your project. Homemade flyers printed on inkjet printers can look reasonable and are fine for using with people who are well known to you, but they will never have the same impact as a



The way we communicate with others and with ourselves ultimately determines the quality of our lives - Anthony Robbins

Communication leads to community, that is, to understanding, intimacy and mutual valuing

- Rollo May



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properly designed and printed flyer. So if you're trying to attract new supporters/users/funders then spend a little more and get the job done well.

What makes a good or bad design is very subjective, so when employing designers the key to getting the perfect result is to make sure you brief them thoroughly. If a designer knows exactly what you have in mind they are more likely to come up with something that will appeal to you.

Don't be afraid to amend or even reject what they come up with - with something as important as a promotional leaflet you shouldn't have to settle for second best!

You also need to ensure that your brand is correctly represented. Consistency is the name of the game. If you have our own project name and/or logo then it's important not to alter it. If you're using a designer to create a new marketing piece, you must ensure you remain in control.

Designers are very good at changing logos to improve them in their eyes, but it's better to have one logo and stick with it, than different logos all over the place.



2. Newsletters/magazines

A project newsletter or even a magazine can be a good way of communicating with your supporters or clients.

These don't have to be highly polished and professional looking, as those that already know you will be interested in your work regardless of how "glitzy" the packaging is. However, it's important they are clean, tidy and legible – KISS (Keep It Simple, Stupid!) is the key to a good newsletter.

It's vital your newsletters and magazines are relevant and of interest to your audience. Human interest stories are often more appealing than technical articles and news items that highlight the successes of the project will go down well.

The use of good photos is encouraged, to give visual appeal, but make sure the quality of the photos is good and they bear some relation to the story. It's best to have photos taken at a high resolution (300dpi) and make sure you have consent forms to use the photos, particularly when they involve children.

Don't use lots of different fonts as this can look messy and avoid too much clip-art, as this can cheapen a newsletter. Avoid using white text out of a dark background for body text. As you see from this example it's more difficult to read.

But, soft! what light through yonder window breaks? It is the east, and Juliet is the sun. Arise, fair sun, and kill the envious moon, Who is already sick and pale with grief, That thou her maid art far more fair than she: Be not her maid, since she is envious; Her vestal livery is but sick and green And none but fools do wear it; cast it off. It is my lady, O, it is my love! O, that she knew she were! She speaks yet she says nothing: what of that? Her eye discourses; I will answer it. I am too bold, 'tis not to me she speaks: Two of the fairest stars in all the heaven, Having some business, do entreat her eyes To twinkle in their spheres till they return. What if her eyes were there, they in her head? The brightness of her cheek would shame those stars, As daylight doth a lamp; her eyes in heaven Would through the airy region stream so bright ...

3. Going digital

A. Website

It's amazing to think it wasn't that long ago we thought websites were homes to spiders! Now they are an integral part of modern day life. People refer to the Internet constantly for information and if you haven't got a presence on the World Wide Web then to many people you might as well not exist!

It's also true that it doesn't have to be expensive to have a presence on the Internet and a simple page extolling the benefits of your project with contact details can be seen by millions without breaking the bank (see email marketing below for information about obtaining a suitable website address).

Whatever style you choose, it's vital that the content of your website is kept up to date. You wouldn't send out a flyer with old prices on, or the dates and times of last year's activities, so don't leave out of date information on your website. If you think you're likely to struggle to keep your website up-to-date then it's best to only upload information that's not time sensitive.

B. Email Marketing

Whether you think that emails are the greatest thing since sliced bread, or you feel they're as much use as a chocolate teapot and the bane of your life, they're here to stay and they can be a very cheap way to promote your project.

The key way to use them is to target the people you think will be interested in them. No one likes receiving SPAM mail and it won't further your cause if you upset people by pestering them by email. However, like newsletters, they can be a vital source of communication with supporters and clients and, used correctly, can also stimulate interest in your project.

Get a proper email address - emails coming from hotmail accounts, or even ISP accounts (btinternet, talktalk, tiscali etc) are likely to be disregarded and will often fall foul of SPAM filters.

If your project was called Bloggsville families, for example, you can purchase a domain name that could be used for your website and emails www.bloggsvillefamilies.org.uk (.org.uk extensions are commonly used for not-for-profit organisations) could cost around £10-30 for two years and would allow you to publish your name@bloggsvillefamilies.org.uk as your email address, which would look far more professional. You can easily find out the cost of any domain name by going to a hosting company such as landl.co.uk

Note: Charities must ensure they have consent from an individual before sending promotional material electronically to non-business addresses.

It's not necessary to offer an individual the opportunity to opt-out-of, or opt-in-to, receiving such information, provided they are clearly notified at the time the data is collected that they will receive such communication, and given details of how and who to contact if they do not wish to receive such information.

However, as a matter of good practice, charities should offer individuals the opportunity to opt-out or opt-in. And if sensitive personal data (such as information relating to an individual's health, criminal records or political affiliation) is collected, then an opt-in must be used.

C. SMS

SMS (Short Message Service), more commonly known as "texting", is a fairly new medium for marketing and fundraising, and will undoubtedly grow in usage. It has a higher appeal among the young and could be a good way to communicate with your service users about your activities.

While mobile technologies are accessible and convenient for donors or users, their effectiveness for marketing/fundraising can be restricted by limited character and screen space or the speed or expense of available bandwidth.

Projects should therefore proceed with care when formulating SMS campaigns, and should seek advice from experts.

You must make the registration process for SMS messaging clear on all forms of relevant documentation, including websites, and you must include procedures for unsubscribing on all messages.

For more information on the use of electronic media go to:

<http://www.institute-of-fundraising.org.uk/NR/rdonlyres/730765FB-C497-41AA-9ECDBOB315E06D16/0-FundraisingthroughElectronicMedia.pdf>

D. Social Networking sites

Facebook, MySpace and Bebo are the buzz words at the moment and many of you may have disregarded them as "just for the kids"

It may certainly be true that young people are using social networking far more than their parents and that's why it may be worth exploring the benefits of such websites as a way of building an online community that can contribute to the building of your project community and increase awareness of your project, by directing visitors to your website.

However, social networking must be carefully supervised as it can be used as a tool for bullying and even abuse, plus administering a social network site could become very time-consuming and not very productive.

Here are a couple of useful links to articles about social networking for charities:

http://www.ictHub.org.uk/articles/Social_Networking_and_Raising_Funds.html

<http://www.wildapricot.com/blogs/newsblog/archive/2007/06/05/six-simple-ways-to-promote-your-cause-on-facebook.aspx>

4. Face to Face Marketing

A. Local Events

Getting out and meeting people face to face can be one of the most effective forms of marketing, as people buy people first, and if you make a good impression on someone then they will be more likely to 'buy into' the project you represent. It's therefore a good idea to be seen at local events where you might meet the sort of people you'd like to reach, either as potential service users or supporters.

Local events could include things such as exhibitions, fetes, carnivals, firework displays, markets, speaking at a local place of worship or Rotary Club meeting. Basically, any event that is likely to attract a gathering of the community and where it's possible to have a presence. For some of these events you might need to have a display stand, whereas others might simply be an opportunity to talk about your work and hand out a few leaflets.

At any such event there is likely to be a cost to have a presence, even if the cost is simply your time, and it's important to be able to evaluate the success of an event, if only to justify the cost.

So the first thing to establish before you even book your space is your objective for being there - and make your objective a SMART one i.e. it needs to be:

Specific

Measurable

Agreed upon

Realistic

Time-based

An objective which simply says, "we want to raise our profile" is too vague to be able to establish after the event whether it has been achieved, whereas "we want to attract 30 'people that can be persuaded to become new supporters within three months'" is far SMARTER.

After you've decided what you hope to achieve you can decide the best way to accomplish it and what resources you require.

B. Own Events

These are essentially events you have to organise yourself, e.g. project launches, open days, sponsored events, parties, the visit of dignitaries or celebrities, etc. Such events will usually entail more time and probably cost more than an event you simply have to attend, but because all the focus is on your project the rewards should be greater too

Again SMART objectives need to be set at the outset. Good advance planning is the key to a successful event - don't leave it all to the last minute.

You may also want to think not only about how you publicise the event to attract people to it, but how you can get the local media interested so they will send a reporter/ photographer to cover it. There is more on this in the 'How to Use the Media Toolkit' in this series.

C. Street to Street and House to House

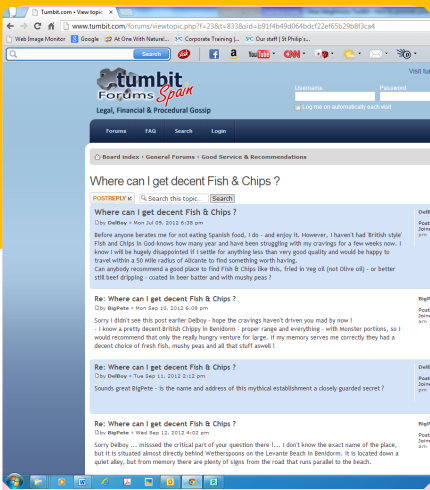
Personal solicitation for committed gifts on the street and house to house, more commonly called 'Face-to-Face' fundraising represents an important and growing source of income to charities and other voluntary organisations. It provides an effective, secure and tax-efficient means by which members of the public can demonstrate their committed support to a wide range of charities and other voluntary organisations.

As this is more commonly used as a form of fundraising rather than promotion, we do not cover it in detail here, but you can find out more and download guidelines for best practice at

<http://www.institute-of-fundraising.org.uk/bestpractice/thecodes/codesoffundraisingpractice/codesdirectory/face-to-face-fundraising.htm>

5. Using the Media

Newspapers and radio stations can seem very scary to those of us not used to dealing with them, but on a local level they are usually very friendly and are always on the lookout for local thing to talk about. They can be a very useful way to promote your project. There is so much to say about using the media we've produced another Toolkit- see 'How to Use the Media'.

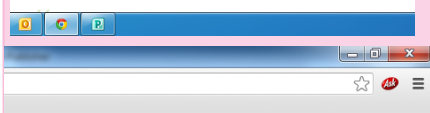


“ I am pleased to sign the North East Declaration on Child Poverty, though I very much regret that it is still necessary to do so. Child Poverty is not only a blight on the lives of the children and their families so directly affected but on all of us in a society where every child should be able to fulfil their God given potential - **Bishop Martin Wharton of Newcastle**

“ Young people form a key part of our customer base and, in more ways than one, represent the future of our region. It is essential that our young people, and their parents, are able to access opportunities for education, health, leisure, employment and social contact. From ensuring easy access for baby buggies to providing cheap travel for all those under 18 GO North East strives to recognise its responsibilities to families and children. Mobility is a critical part of avoiding poverty and buses are essential in providing mobility for many families. We are proud to commit to reducing child poverty in North East England. - **Peter Huntley, Managing Director, GO North East**

“ It seems so unfair and so unnecessary in this day and age and in this wealthy country that there should still be children living in poverty. Everybody deserves to grow up happy and healthy; everybody deserves the opportunity to achieve their potential. We must fight to end child poverty! **John Grundy (Historian)**

“ A civilised society can be defined by how it looks after its weakest members. In the 21st century we should be proud of how we enable every member of our society to achieve to their fullest capacity and thereby contribute wholeheartedly in return. Tackling child poverty is a responsibility of business as well as the state and the third sector. We must contribute wherever we can. - **James Ramsbotham, Chief Executive, North East Chamber of Commerce**



NEAR NEIGHBOURS CASE STUDIES

BRINGING PEOPLE TOGETHER AND MAKING A

Near Neighbours brings together people of different build relationships and collaborate on initiatives that

Near Neighbours is working with two local groups in Leicester which bring celebrations. Saffron Neighbourhood Management Board hosted a Christmas party, and Hope Hamilton Church held a Light Party during Diwali to bring

Saffron Neighbourhood Management providers to make the Saffron neighbourhood being responded to, and puts local p

Hope Hamilton is a Church of England attendees, mostly from White British more to meet the needs of the comm

6. Word of Mouth - Person to Person

We all like to receive a tip from a friend about a good product or service they've experienced. We're more likely to use a plumber recommended to us by someone we know than take a chance on one unknown to us.

Undoubtedly the most powerful promotional tools you have are your satisfied users and supporters. One good word about your project from a happy "punter" will spread the message like wild fire.

Remember also that word of mouth can be a way to convey a negative experience Research has shown that, on average, if we experience a good service as a customer we will tell 3 people about it, but if we experience a poor service we will tell 17 people!

Research in the retail trade has also indicated that if we experience a poor service, but having complained about it we feel our complaint was heard and resolved to our satisfaction, we are twice as likely to buy from that organisation again.

Therefore, talk to your clients, service users and supporters. Keep them happy (as far as possible) and ask them for commendations you can use with others. You could maybe include a commendation in a publicity brochure.

Also, collect good case studies from the community you are serving. If people feel your project has made an impact on their life then hopefully they will want to share that with others. Sometimes names may need to be changed to protect identities, but a story can still be told that will publicise the excellent work you do.

