

PUBLICITY BASICS

Publicity is very important to any organization. Good publicity allows organizations to attract new members, raise money and awareness, announce programs and services, and educate the community. Careful thought and planning should be put into your campaign. **Start early!!**

The most effective publicity allows the reader to quickly grasp all of the important facts of the program within several seconds, while being creative and eye-catching at the same time. Promotional materials should be clearly printed with a message designed to evoke a response from the viewer. It is not necessary to be extremely artistic, but your message should be clear and understandable. Remember the 5 Ws & H when creating your publicity: who, what, when, where, why, and how.

Things to consider before you begin:

- **Budget**
Determine how much you can realistically spend on publicity. Have you received any donations? What has ASWU allocated your organization?
- **Audience**
Who do you want to reach and how? Is there a pre-selected market available? Take into account age groups, audience's likes and dislikes, academic interests, etc. Publicizing something for professors or non-students may be entirely different than publicizing the same event for students. You may have to create more than one type of publicity for the same event.
- **Information**
Make sure that your publicity materials contain all of the important information. Try to publicize the aspect of your program that is most familiar to the audience. Make sure you include correct names and logos of all co-sponsors.
- **Resources**
What or who are your resources? Do you have money for WITS to assist or are people in your groups skilled at art, design, and/or computers/design?
- **Location**
Where will your materials get the most attention? Choose high traffic areas and give thought to placing your advertisement in different and unusual places.
- **Schedule**
Advertising for the event should start 2-3 weeks prior to the event. If you advertise earlier, people may forget about your event because they will become used to seeing your publicity.
- **Creativity**
Is there something new that can be done other than posters or mailbox stuffers? Think about how you can make your event more sustainable. See the *Creative Publicity Ideas* handout for more suggestions
- **Logos**
Willamett University logos including the bearcat printed on any form of publicity, must be approved by Jill Munger, Director of Auxiliary Support Services & Clothing and Gift Buyer. Request forms are available on the OSA website and students must also submit a proof of their artwork.

Essential items to include in all publicity:

- Name of attraction or event
- Date of event
- Time: beginning and ending
- Location of event
- Admission price (even if it's free)
- Deadline for applying (if applicable)
- Contact information of the sponsoring organization
- Any co-sponsoring organization names

A few other suggestions:

- Always use spell check and have someone else look over it before mass producing or sending.
- When using a computer to make publicity, *SAVE* your work frequently.
- Use various colors and shapes to avoid the bulletin board blur of all white, rectangle paper.
- Balance light and dark space on your page.
- Do not use more than three different fonts on your publicity.
- Using all capital letters IS VERY HARD TO READ FROM LONG DISTANCES.
- Remember, **P**oor **P**ublicity **P**romises **P**eople you've **P**lanned a **P**retty **P**itiful **P**rogram!
- Please add to all publicity "Attendees who wish special accommodations due to a disability may contact _____."
- Utilize electronic advertising such as email, Facebook groups, Facebook ads, and your student organization's website.

This is one of many handouts available to you. Feel free to meet with any Student Activities staff member for more details about this topic or any others related to leadership or your student organization. We also have open advising hours every Wednesday from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. The Office of Student Activities is located in the University Center, on the 2nd floor, or by telephone at (503) 370-6463. Visit our website at www.willamette.edu/dept/osa or email us at wustudentinvolvement@gmail.com. Adapted from the Office of Student Activities and Leadership, University of Michigan.