

MARKETING, COMMUNICATION AND PROMOTIONAL TECHNIQUES

There are lots of techniques that your club can use to market and promote itself. Here are some to consider:

1. Use the club logo on letterhead, signage, and other promotional material.
2. Websites are a simple and effective way to communicate to your members, supporters and the local community. Ask around. Club member may have the skills to design and write the club's website. Basic websites should include:
 - what your club offers
 - a calendar of events and meetings
 - membership information
 - your club's contact details
3. Link your website to related sites. Ask your local council, schools, and recreation centres to provide a link to your site.
If you have the resources, consider discussion forums and other functions on the site. Assign someone to update pages and add new information.
4. Newsletters provide information to members about club events, activities, and news. Ask around members – you may have a club member with the skills to design and write your club's newsletter. Bear in mind it is less expensive to email your newsletter to members rather than printing it. Don't forget to publish it on your website too.
5. Signage with club name and logo should be used at registration days, presentation days, competitions, and promotional events.
6. Flyers and brochures that outline the club's services or competitions, membership fees, and contact information. Use your local community notice boards, library, recreation centres, primary schools, or letter box drop to distribute these.
7. T-shirts and uniforms can enhance a club's image while promoting a club at events and activities. Caps, socks and T-shirts can be sold to raise funds and promote the club at the same time.

8. Advertising is paid information that appears in different forms of media eg. newspapers, radio, and television. You control what's included in the advertisement. However, it is costly so it's wise to consider cheaper forms of marketing first.

If you want to advertise then choose the most appropriate advertising method for your target market or audience

USING THE MEDIA TO PROMOTE YOUR CLUB

Promoting the club this way can be as simple as ringing your local newspaper with an interesting story or information on an event. Find out what they're interested in covering and how you can give them the information. Check their deadlines and requirements.

Developing a good relationship with your local media can be useful for raising the club's public profile. Once this relationship is established, future contact will be a lot easier.

The media is more likely to publish or broadcast stories that will appeal to their audiences. Work out ways to make your information more interesting and find angles to attract attention. This is more likely to get your club in the news.

Access Local Media

Here are some ideas on how to access local media and get your sport and club in the news. If you have an event or an interesting story to tell, contact the following people:

Local or community newspapers

Your local paper is most likely to be interested in covering your event but sometimes they don't have the staff to do it. So if the paper cannot send someone to cover the club's event it may be happy for you to send them a story. Media releases are the standard way to provide information to the media. See the sample media release below – they are not difficult to write. Take some photos and offer to send those too.

Radio

Make contact with your regional radio station to let them know who you are, what the club is doing, and the types of events coming up. Your local radio may have a regular community events notice that can include your club's events.

COMMUNICATION WITHIN THE CLUB

Each club is different and will have efficient ways of communicating with their members. The responsibility for communication may be shared by everyone in the club or one person may be dedicated to it. The important thing is that communication is kept up. A few simple systems will ensure everything runs smoothly.

Correspondence

All sorts of information will arrive in the mailbox and email inbox of a club. Someone will need to sift through this information and distribute it to the relevant people in the most effective manner.

Official circulars/bulletins

Clubs may receive regular newsletters or bulletins from their national sports or recreational organisation. Someone in the club needs to ensure that officials and members are made aware of the relevant news, deadlines, opportunities etc.

Records and databases

Ideally the club database should be organised to allow for specific targeted communication:

- committee
- Premier Grade Squad & Management
- all players
- social members
- under 18's/Juniors
- seniors and veterans
- all members
- lapsed members
- external contacts
- sponsors and VIPs

The database should be compatible with the club's email system to allow for targeted emails. Some clubs assign their secretary to manage their membership database. The information technology section of Club Kit has more information on databases and how to set one up.

How is everything communicated?

1. **Newsletters** are the most common and direct way of communicating with members, especially if it is via email.

Newsletters should be clear and easy to read. A good newsletter needs to get all relevant information to the right people in a timely and accessible fashion.

2. General **emails** make communication between clubs and their member incredibly easy. But be thoughtful about what you are sending out to your members.

It is more effective to send out a single notice out with five or six key points than five or six separate emails especially if this follows a committee meeting.

When sending out mass emails list all the email addresses in the “bcc” box not the “to” box or the “cc” box. This prevents everyone on the list seeing every email address and avoids privacy and spam problems.

3. **Websites** and the internet have become the single most powerful communication tool. They are cheap and effective ways to get information out to existing and prospective members alike. It is great if your club can maintain a vibrant, informative and up-to-date club website.