



STARCLUB NT

Marketing and Promoting Your Club

What is marketing?

Marketing can be defined as a process by which individuals and groups obtain what they want through creating, offering and exchanging products of value with others.

All sport and recreation organisations undertake marketing, although they are often unaware that they are actually doing so. Listing your club in the yellow pages telephone directory; placing information about membership registrations in the local newspaper; offering a discount on court hire prices to induce greater use of the courts; or redecorating the club facilities are all examples of formal marketing activities.

An example of informal marketing involves a person enquiring about joining a surf lifesaving club and the secretary being particularly helpful with providing the membership information over the phone.

A mother of a prospective junior tennis club member watching a coach conduct a lesson with the children looking bored and not enjoying the session is a less positive example of informal marketing.

Who does marketing?

These examples of marketing indicate that different individuals within your sport and recreation club/group conduct marketing activities. It is particularly useful to appoint an individual or small team as marketing officers to oversee the development and implementation of your organisation's marketing strategies.

Marketing tools

The 'marketing mix' or marketing tools an organisation can use can be classified into four categories:

Product: Includes the quality and accessibility of the services the club or group provides, for example, competitions and social functions.

Price: Includes the cost of membership fees and discounts offered.

Place: Includes the clubrooms or the facilities where competitions are conducted.

Promotion: Includes advertising of the club/ group, a promotion at the local shopping centre or an article in the local community newspaper.



Developing a simple marketing plan

A marketing plan does not need to be particularly difficult to develop or the strategies costly to implement. There are many different ways to develop a marketing plan. A simple plan for a small club would contain some basic elements including:

Objectives: Marketing objectives should be specific, measurable and achievable. An example would be recruiting an additional 20 junior members by the start of competition.

Strategies: These can be developed around the marketing mix and must be targeted towards the specific target markets. Target marketing is the practice of designing and directing specific services at specific individuals or groups of customers. For example, if your club or group was trying to attract new junior members you would need to develop strategies to specifically attract juniors.

Budget: A realistic marketing budget within the club's/group's capabilities and focussing on low-cost or no-cost strategies would be recommended.

Evaluation

Make sure strategies are put in place to see if you have met your objectives. Some activities are easy to monitor, such as a membership drive, others will not be able to be evaluated until after the event. Collect copies of press clippings or media coverage, records of attendances at functions or competitions and any feedback your group receives whether it's positive or negative.

Ways to market your club

- Electronic e.g. electronic newsletters, website.
- Newsletters.
- Competitions.
- Advertising.
- Functions.
- Sponsorships

Example marketing plan for a junior club open day

Marketing objective: To recruit 20 junior members by 10 December.

1. Arrange date and time of Free Junior Club Open Day
2. Make a wishlist of what & who you will do at the open day:
 - Determine sign-up fee
 - Free coaching (who will run these?)
 - Games/activities (who will run these?)
 - Information desk (need welcoming volunteer and forms to record names/phone numbers of those attended)
 - Sausage sizzle (need volunteer)

- Competition to entice attendance and then collect names and contacts to follow up (Need prize, someone to organise on the day)
3. Create a budget outlining all aspects of the event including:
 - Staff costs
 - Food & beverage
 - Signage & banners
 - Advertising
 - Prizes
 - Equipment
 - Venue hire
 - Sponsorship/In-kind support
 - Miscellaneous
 4. Develop a flyer advertising open day and a distribution list eg:
 - Place flyer on local community notice boards including local shopping centres, library, swimming pool, etc.
 - Contact principals of local primary schools to place information in the school newsletter
 - Place information in the club newspaper offering a free soft drink for those who bring a friend who is not a member to the open day
 5. Write an article and provide a photo for the local newspaper focusing on a local junior who joined up at an open day and is now representing the state, distribute to media with flyer to try and promote event
 6. Conduct the Free Junior Club Open Day
 7. Follow up those who attended but did not join up on the day to see if they would still like to join.
 8. **Manage success of the event on how many members signed up and from overall profit made at the end of the event.**

Developing a detailed marketing plan

A detailed marketing plan for a larger club or association would need to include further information such as the following:

Situational analysis – this contains information on the organisation, an analysis of the customers, a description of the services currently being offered, an analysis of the competition and the external environment.

Opportunity analysis – this section utilises the information from the situational analysis and identifies opportunities that need to be addressed.

The [Australian Sports Commission](http://www.australian-sports-commission.gov.au) has further information on developing a detailed marketing plan.

Working with the media to promote your club

Focusing on the marketing tool of promotion, and one aspect that many people lack confidence in, is working with the media.

How to write a media release

Your club or group can communicate with the media through an invitation alerting the media to a forthcoming event, such as the opening of new clubrooms or a media release about an event which is to take place or has taken place, such as a family day.

When producing a media release:

- make a point of finding out first names. As a general rule, give the person's title first, followed by the name (e.g. the President, Joe Smith). Otherwise, follow the style of the newspaper or magazine for which you are writing. Check the spelling. Don't feel embarrassed about asking a person to spell his or her name;
- use simple language;
- check the media deadlines. It is useless if it arrives late;
- ensure the release is typed or word processed – double spaced, with wide margins. Use only one side of the paper;
- provide photographs, or present opportunities for photographs;
- put the name of your club at the top to the release. The wording 'media release' should be prominently displayed; and
- supply the name, address and telephone number of a club person to contact for further information. If the contact number is a place of work, it is common courtesy to inform the company that there could be calls from the media.

A good media release will answer six questions concerning the event:
Who? What? When? Where? Why? How?

Remember!

Many organisations make the mistake of spending a lot of time and money on conducting promotions to recruit new members and forget about retaining current members. Developing marketing strategies to improve the basic product or services the club/group provides, the attitudes of volunteers or staff towards members or customers and the standard of facilities may be less expensive and more effective in the long-term.

Other resources

Find more information on Growing Your Sport [click here](#).