



Marketing tips for good neighbour schemes

There are a number of marketing tools you can use to promote your good neighbour scheme to potential volunteers and clients which don't require lots of time or money. However, there's no 'silver bullet' – the key to effective communications is to use all of the tools as often as you can. Various studies cite different statistics as to the number of times someone needs to see something being 'advertised' before they will make a commitment. Thomas Smith wrote a guide called *Successful Advertising* in 1885. The saying he used is still being used today.

The first time people look at any given ad, they don't even see it.

The second time, they don't notice it.

The third time, they are aware that it is there.

The fourth time, they have a fleeting sense that they've seen it somewhere before.

The fifth time, they actually read the ad.

The sixth time they thumb their nose at it.

The seventh time, they start to get a little irritated with it.

The eighth time, they start to think, "Here's that confounded ad again."

The ninth time, they start to wonder if they're missing out on something.

The tenth time, they ask their friends and neighbours if they've tried it.

The eleventh time, they wonder how the company is paying for all these ads.

The twelfth time, they start to think that it must be a good product.

The thirteenth time, they start to feel the product has value.

The fourteenth time, they start to remember wanting a product exactly like this for a long time.

The fifteenth time, they start to yearn for it because they can't afford to buy it.

The sixteenth time, they accept the fact that they will buy it sometime in the future.

The seventeenth time, they make a note to buy the product.

The eighteenth time, they curse their poverty for not allowing them to buy this terrific product.

The nineteenth time, they count their money very carefully.

The twentieth time prospects see the ad, they buy what is offering.

In other words: If at first you don't succeed, then try, try and try again!

Media



Getting an article placed in a local newspaper or magazine can be a very effective way of raising awareness. As well as your local free or paid for newspaper, your area may also have a parish or church newsletter, a magazine from the resident's association or a syndicated publication such as Round and About or Vantage Point. Ask friends and neighbours which publications they have received through their door and keep the editorial contact details. Local schools also send out regular e-newsletters and may be willing to include something from the local community.

Of course, there's a lot of competition from other community groups, charities and businesses for free editorial space so you need to make sure that your article is interesting or relevant. You need a 'hook'.

A hook might be a particular milestone (your scheme's 25th year or the recruitment of your 100th volunteer); it might be something that's relevant to a topical news story. It could be the results of a survey you have carried out among your volunteers or clients (e.g. "75% of our volunteer drivers have been affected by rising insurance"; "clients have increased by 20%").

Your article needs to include the 5 'w's:

- Who
- What
- Where
- When
- Why

And remember to KISS – Keep It Short and Simple – and add some contact details for further information.

Pictures can add an extra dimension and help to attract attention so include one if you can (it needs to be a minimum of 1MB for print – any size for web-based use).

Social media



Did you know that if the Facebook community was a population it would be the third largest in the world after China and India?

Or that more people own a mobile device than own a toothbrush?

Or that grandparents are the fastest growing demographic on Twitter?

Love it or loathe it, social media is here to stay. It's growing and it's growing fast so it's time to jump on board – especially as Facebook is now also the second most used search engine (after Google). Social media can be one of the most effective ways for charities and community organisations to build supporters, boost donations, share success stories, network with like-minded organisations, encourage people to sign up to campaigns, recruit volunteers, or demonstrate the impact of their work.

Posts on Twitter are limited to just 140 characters (including spaces) so writing an erudite tweet can take a little practice at first. Its users are primarily businesses and those interested in news and celebrities.

Facebook has more of a personal and community audience so is better suited to organisations like good neighbour schemes. There's no limit to the number of words or pictures you can post (although the KISS rule still applies).

Creating a Facebook or Twitter account is free and take just a few minutes to set up. Encourage your volunteers to like and share your posts – these recommendations are super-targeted (going to like minded people), personal and FREE!

Websites



Websites are your online 'shop window'. The internet is now a business fact of life and it's where the vast majority of people turn when they are looking for information.

Ideally you'll have your own website with a dedicated url (personalised website address) such as www.wokinggoodneighbours.org.uk for example.

But if you don't have the resources to invest in your own website then there are several community sites which allow you to quickly and easily create your own mini-site within theirs, free of charge.

www.interests.me allows you to have a community webpage and create and share newsletters with your own groups and others within your local area so you can spread your news more widely.

www.surreycommunity.info is a website developed by the county council and the 11 district and borough councils.

It provides:

- A free directory that lists community, voluntary and not-for-profit groups in Surrey and the bordering areas.
- Free web hosting for community, voluntary and not-for-profit groups in Surrey and the bordering areas.
- Support for groups using the SurreyCommunity.info system to build websites

Don't forget to share your website address details with Surrey Community Action so we can add a link to your website from our own. Email vickit@surreyca.org.uk



Leaflets



Make sure your leaflet creates the right impression by following these tips:

Clear Message

Think about the message you want to convey in your leaflets. The best way to have an effective message is to be clear about what your organisation does and use your message to appeal to your potential volunteers or clients.

Catch Attention

You'll also need something, whether it is a catchy headline or unusual colours, to catch the attention of the recipient. If you are dropping your leaflets through the letterbox, chances are the person receives a few leaflets every day. Your leaflet must therefore have something to immediately draw the person's attention and make them read the whole thing.

If you cannot afford to use a graphic designer then you can try free online design tools such as www.canva.com. You don't need to download any software or use any particular type of computer.

The Right Size

Leaflets come in many shapes and sizes, but some of them are more effective than others. Don't create a leaflet that is too big or a leaflet that is too small for adding enough details. Leaflets that fold can be effective as well; make sure they don't fold into too many layers or people might find it too much hassle.

Clear and Correct Content

Nothing is more unprofessional than simple spelling mistakes or incorrect information on a leaflet so ask someone else to proof your leaflet before you print it.

Great Images

You can use a great picture to draw attention to what you're doing and to convey your message. It's an old cliché, but pictures can be worth a thousand words, and using maps or photos can help you add more information to the leaflet. Having something different rather than a long list or masses of text can have a hugely positive impact.



A Proper Call to Action

There should always be a call to action on your leaflet, whether it is urging a potential volunteer to call you or follow you on social media. If your leaflet doesn't provide a reason, or a way, for someone to contact you straight away, it is unlikely they will in the future.

Distribution

Like the old saying about a falling tree making no noise if there's no one in the forest to hear it, a great leaflet poorly distributed isn't worth a penny. Once you've taken care of the design and the content, it is essential the leaflet is distributed well, to those likely to be interested in your service or volunteering opportunity.

Events



Local events such as scout fairs or church fetes can be a cheap and effective way of getting the message out about your scheme to a lot of people in a short amount of time. Take your leaflets along and something to attract people over to your stall: a lucky dip for children; a raffle or a game.



Surrey Community Action has a 'pin the wheels on the car' game that we can lend to you for an event if you don't have your own. Email vickit@surreyca.org.uk

Word of mouth



Your volunteers are one of the most effective communication tools you have. Who else can speak so passionately about the benefits of volunteering for your scheme? They are your best ambassadors but sometimes people forget to talk about something when it becomes a way of life, so give a gentle reminder every now and then to encourage your volunteers to talk to Surrey based friends, family, colleagues and neighbours.