

Advertising

Media Advertising

Advertising includes paid placement in newspapers, magazines, journals, television, radio and online media, where you pay for the spot and control the entire message.

Use ads to boost registrations and ticket sales, and as a way to highlight sponsors.

However, advertising is extremely expensive. Even a tiny ad (2 inches square) in a major metropolitan newspaper can cost hundreds of dollars. Television advertising runs to thousands of dollars, and radio advertising is often ineffective unless numerous spots are purchased.

As an alternative to buying advertising at full prices, contact local media outlets to see if they will be a “**media sponsor**” for the event. A media sponsor donates a number of free ads in return for getting recognition in other media where the event is being advertised, as well as on event printed materials (e.g. tickets, banners, programs, etc.) You will need to contact the media outlet’s promotions department as far in advance of the event as possible, and they may require that the client pay for some of the advertising. Use your negotiating skills (see the next chapter) and explain to the media outlet the **benefits** of getting involved with your particular event. For example, if you are pitching the event to a newspaper, you might explain how they will reach prospective readers and advertisers, as well as being associated with a popular community event.

If you do not have media sponsorship, consider trying small **classified** or **display ads** in your local newspaper or a newsletter read by your intended audience. Your ad should include a large heading that promises a **benefit**. In addition to at least one benefit, your ad should include the event date, time, cost, and where to get more information. Here’s an example for a publishing conference:

PUBLISH YOUR BOOK

Find out how you can become a published author at a conference on Saturday January 30 from 10 am to 4 pm at the Civic Center. Tickets are almost sold out, so register today. Call Conferences Unlimited at 555-1212 or visit www.pubconf.com.

Direct Mail

Most organizations have a mailing list, and systems in place for sending mail to the people on their list. If the organization wants to try mailing invitations or promotional brochures to new prospects, they will need to **rent a mailing list**. One way to get a list

is to contact associations or magazine publishers to see if they are willing to rent their list to promote the event. Online, search for “mailing lists” or “mailing list broker” (a **broker** can give you advice about the best lists to choose) or check the Yellow Pages under “mailing lists.” Brokers and companies that sell lists can help you find lists broken down by geographic area, number of employees, industry, etc.

Buying a list from a broker typically costs about 5 to 25 cents per name. With the cost of brochure and postage on top of that, you can expect to spend about \$1 per mailing. Before doing a large mailing you should test a list by mailing to a small group first.

You can find helpful advice on using direct mail through the U.S. Postal Service publications listed below:

Tutorial on Direct Mail

<http://www.usps.com/directmail/welcome.htm>

Business Mail 101

<http://www.usps.com/businessmail101>

Brochures

When preparing brochures, focus on communicating all the **benefits** of attending. Benefits of attending an event may include:

- a fun night out
- supporting a good cause
- reconnecting with old friends
- learning something new
- networking
- hearing a celebrity speak (or meeting a celebrity)
- keeping up with current trends in the industry

Among the other items you might include in a brochure:

- **Who** should attend
- When and **where** the event takes place
- Information about the entertainers or speakers
- **Testimonials (e.g. from someone who attended last year)**
- That **seats are limited** (mention if past events sold out)
- A call to action such as **“Get your tickets now!”**
- **How** to register, including your phone number and web address

The ideal brochure for a public event is one that can double as a poster (e.g. printed on one side of a colorful 8½" x 11" sheet). Post them on public bulletin boards and, if appropriate, boards at bookstores and college campuses.

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