Publicity

One of the most important aspects of creating a successful program or sustaining the membership in your group is through publicity. This tells the community what you are about as a group, and what you are doing. As you look around the University, you see flyers everywhere! How can you make your organization stand out and encourage others to participate?

Remember the Six “W”:  
1. Who is doing it?  
2. What is happening?  
3. Why is it happening?  
4. Who is it for?  
5. Where is it happening?  
6. When is it happening?

Consider many methods of publicity: word of mouth, posters, flyers, banners, showcase displays, tables on campus, announcements to campus organizations, classroom bulletin boards, leaflets passed out while people are waiting in lines, giving away free tickets, and announcements in the Miami Hurricane. Take advantage of promotions—advertising you can get without cost, such as news releases, public service announcements, and newspaper articles.

Here are tips on planning your publicity:

- Allot about 15% of the total cost of the program for advertising
- Create a time-line or publicity campaign. Work backwards from the date of your program. Be aware of deadlines for ads and reserving space. The optimal time to begin advertising is 2-3 weeks before the event.
- Have the name of the organization sponsoring the event on all flyers and banners.
- Have a logo that is easily identified with your organization.
- Use “teasers” to GRAB people’s attention.
- Make them want to know more. An example for a recycling program would be to distribute palm cards with the recycling symbol on them two weeks prior to the event. One week prior, distribute the same palm cards with additional information such as date, time, and place.
- Flyers should: GRAB the attention of passersby, SUSTAIN the reader’s interest, and ELICIT a response from the interested readers.
- Do something unique to attract attention to flyers: use different shapes or hand color flyers. “Less is best.” White space is good. Do not use every inch of space.
- Be succinct. Do not give too much information to read. Make flyers simple and eye-catching.
- Utilize the upper left-hand corner: people’s eyes automatically go to that space. Catch their attention quickly.
- Vary type faces in size and weight, but use only or two different type faces (less cluttered). Look at the layout from a distance of 8-10 feet; symbols and print that are too close will be unreadable. If this occurs, redo layout.
- Send a copy of all publicity to your sponsors with a thank-you.
Here are suggestions for getting the word out:

- Send out an email to the StudOrgs Listserv (studorgs@listserv.miami.edu).
- Post it on the COSO Database (www.miami.edu/myumgroups).
- Reserve a table in the UC breezeway to pass out flyers and answer questions about the event.
- Send personalized letters/invitations for the program.
- Advertise an upcoming event on the corner of classroom chalkboards, before and after class.
- Have people in costume on campus, giving out information about the event to passers-by.
- Have promoters attend student organization meetings to talk about the upcoming event.
- Hang sandwich boards on people walking around campus to publicize the event.
- Promote the program by placing free spots on WVUM radio.
- Advertise an event in the Miami Hurricane’s "Campus Calendar."
- Purchase blank 8 foot plastic banners from the Information Center for $10.
- Reserve banner space at the UC. Reservation Office up to one semester in advance and at least 48 hours in advance. Breezeway banners are seen by a large percentage of people at the University.
- Leaflet all lines on campus: food lines, registration lines, financial service lines, ticket lines, etc....
- Use creative advertising. Ever seen a flyer attached to a remote controlled car?
- Have an artist make posters for an upcoming event in the middle of the campus to attract attention.
- Place table tents in eating areas and reading lounges around campus. Permission must be obtained from Chartwells and the Rathskeller prior to distributing in these areas.
- Advertise in Departmental newsletters and speak with departments about posting your flyer on their windows.
- Advertise in the Miami Hurricane: They offer a campus student organization rate for active registered student organizations. You can also request money from SAFAC for advertising in the Hurricane!