

# Your District PR Plan

**name/date**



Let's talk about planning – something we do every day – and relate that back to your Kiwanis district.

For example, you plan what time you're leaving for work, how you will accomplish your work tasks, how you will accomplish everything that needs to be done at home. Then it's time to plan your volunteer events, maybe a Kiwanis meeting or convention. All those messages. So little time. The PR team at Kiwanis International has prepared a short course in writing a PR or a communications plan. A plan like this can help your district on the path to success.



# Make your message matter

- 10,000 messages a day
- More channels than ever before
- Switch screens 21 times an hour
- 3 seconds to grab someone's attention

We are bombarded with messages – not just daily, but now hourly. And, the news cycle changes every hour – sometimes every half hour! We are exposed to up to 10,000 messages a day, from television, radio, email, social media, billboards, newspapers, magazines, digital message boards. Most of us now get our news on our phones, so in between the social media posts and reading content, we see pop up ads, video ads, ads in the middle of a video ... the messages are everywhere.

That's why you have to make your message matter! It has to cut through all of this clutter to land in your inbox or news feed and cause you to take the desired action.



# What can we do?

- Repeat, repeat, repeat
- Tell stories
- Create two-way opportunities
- Practice patience
- Plan!

Research shows that it takes up to seven exposures for someone to remember the message they see or hear.

We believe telling stories helps us share our message. If you look at the Kiwanis International social media channels and website, you'll see that most of the content there is a story – a story about a club helping a kid; a story about a club cleaning a park or playground; a story about a new club opening in a community that can benefit from Kiwanis.

We also need to create two-way opportunities for conversation when we tell a story. That's why we have group Facebook pages, where people can leave their comments, share their point of view. It allows the recipient of the message to participate in the conversation instead of just being talked to. Our digital marketing efforts on social media allow potential members – and members – to message us. We can message back to them. It's more than us just telling them something, they can respond, ask questions and we can create a dialogue.

Patience is key – if it takes seven exposures to get your message across, think about all the different channels you'll have to use to spread that message. You have to map out your channels and insert that message into every channel, often more than once. You can't give a speech and expect everyone to remember your message if they only hear it once.

Planning is most important part of everything. We plan our day, we plan our work, we plan our vacations. Why wouldn't we plan our messages? If we want to change behavior, effect behavior, get people to do what we want them to do – such as submit projects to the signature project contest; hold a One Day event; open new Key Clubs; increase membership in current clubs ... we need a plan.



# Let's plan

## Basic communications planning

- Define your audience
- Define behavior you want to occur
- Develop key messages
- Determine delivery / frequency

You can create a basic communications plan by defining the following things:

Define your audience – you have to know your audience before you can develop your message, because messages will change based on your audience. You wouldn't deliver a budget message to a corporate executive the same way you'd deliver that message to a teenager. You have to think about how people receive and share information. You have to tailor your message to your audience.

Once you define your audience, determine what it is you want them to do. Maybe your message is that you want to open six new clubs in your district over the next year. What is the behavior your current club members need to exhibit to accomplish these goals?

When you know the goals you can develop your key messages – the key elements you want your audience to remember. The messages might be 1) to increase membership we are going to broaden our circle of potential members and invite friends, family and colleagues to our meetings and service projects; we are going to try digital marketing efforts and advertise on social media; we are going to work with community leaders, school leaders and others in our city to encourage membership because more members means more kids being helped.

Next is delivery – how will the messages be delivered? In email? In person during a speech or small group meeting? By social media? You will have to tailor your messages to each

delivery method – you don't want to share a speech on social media, for example.

Finally, frequency. How often do you want to deliver the message, and what is the deadline to delivering the message.



# Communications plan

AUDIENCE	OBJECTIVES	KEY MESSAGES	CHANNELS	FREQUENCY	RESULTS
Leadership – LT Gov and below	Increase membership, open six clubs, allowing us to reach more children who need our help.	More members means more kids who are helped; more SLPs can be opened; greater impact in the community	Social media, email, one-on-one conversations; digital advertising	Social posts 2x week; weekly email; daily advertising; monthly op ed/letter to editor about club	How many members joined; how many clubs opened
Emerging leaders					
Club officers					
Club members					
Public					

Let’s walk through a communications plan for increasing membership and opening new clubs – this is not set in stone, these are just suggestions to illustrate building a plan.

First, determine your audience. Remember, you want to tailor your message to your audience. In this instance, let’s say our audience is leaders – you want to engage with Lt. Goves first, and then work your way down the leadership chain. Who are your emerging leaders? This is an issue that will face them, so include them as an audience. You also want to reach out to your club officers – presidents, treasurers, secretaries, PR chairs, everyone involved in making your club successful. Your members are also very important. They are the ones who will likely do the one-on-one invitations to potential new members in this scenario.

Using a chart like this allows you to think about the various communications channels you use and the lead time needed to get content into each one. For example, a district newsletter might be sent once a month, but it might be completed the week before the new month begins. That tells you that you need to have content to the writer/producer of that email three to four weeks early. Social media is another example of a channel that needs some lead time. If you want anyone to design a square or meme to go with your message, you might need a week or two; same goes for ads. The content for the district’s or club’s social channels might be planned three to four weeks in advance, so you will need to determine any deadlines you have to meet. You might want to produce a FAQ or cheat sheet for members with ice breakers, conversation starters – you’ll have to allow time to

write it, edit it, get buy-in or approval from leadership and allow time for printing and distribution.

The great thing about doing this is that once you've been through a cycle, it becomes like any other template you use in your club or district.



# Planning

Research

Budget

Objectives – strategies and tactics

Execution

Evaluation

As you begin your plan, you'll want to do your research. Who are your Lt. Governors? Who are some emerging leaders? Do you have access to club leaders and members? What are roadblocks to forming new clubs – from current members to those in the public who are not members. Is it worth having a focus group? Could you answer the questions by sending a survey? (Survey Monkey is a free resource.)

What's your budget? Do you have money to hold service projects at the new club meetings? Is there a budget for food or drinks?

What is your overall objective – in this example it's to gain new members. Your strategy would include having informational meetings for members of the public to attend and your tactics would be how you advertise them, market them and encourage club members to invite friends and colleagues to a meeting.

Your execution is just that – how you execute your plan. Define who does what. Who is your writer, designer, scheduler? Who is good with social media? Who can help with emails? Who can make sure each audience has the right talking points.

And evaluation. At the conclusion of the campaign, did your district attract new members? How many new clubs were opened under this plan?

In PR parlance the key elements of the PR Plan is called ROPE – research, objectives,

planning and execution/evaluation. In the end it's the same no matter what you call it – were you successful? Can you measure your success? Can you look back on your campaign and see where you might have changed something – made a course correction – to get a better result.



# So ... planning

## Measurable results

- Behavior
- Level
- Time
- Public

You can be as detailed as you want to be. In Public Relations coursework, we learn about the importance of measuring our results – that tells us if we were successful. PR plans often seek to change a behavior (sell this this new television) at a certain level (sell 10,000 of these new televisions) over a period of time (in the next three months) to a target public (maybe it's baby boomers, maybe it's millennials). So you write a plan that details how you will change the behavior of your target audience to achieve your results.

These can be involved and time-consuming but people in the PR industry generally love to work on these kinds of plans. If you have someone like that – maybe your District PR Coordinator or a really dynamic club PR chair, you can ask them to help.

In public relations, we often refer to this as a BLT and a pickle – Behavior, Level, Time and publics ... BLT and a Pickle.



# Measurable objectives

- Send 100 meeting invitations to prospective members at local businesses.  
-- OR --
- Increase club membership by 25 percent by focusing on guests who live and/or work within a 30-minute drive of the new club each month.

This is where we sometimes get hung up – on our objectives. An objective is not “send 100 meeting invitations,” that could be a tactic within the plan, say for a district meeting or open house. A measurable objective would be increasing a club’s membership by 25 percent. You can measure that! And your tactics could be digital advertising, one-on-one meetings or conversations and or networking.



# How-to

Strategies – what you want to do

Tactics – how you will do it

We often start with tactics, such as event fliers, writing social media posts, sending emails

We need to begin with our strategy – what is it that we want to do. Let your strategy drive your tactics, not the other way around. It's easy to get involved in the tactics first because that's the fun stuff and the stuff you can jump right in on doing.



# Strategies

- Events
- Collateral material
- Community outreach
- Media relations
- Social media and digital
- Advertising

So if we're going to increase our membership, our strategies might include holding some events, producing some collateral materials such as brochures, doing some community outreach, media relations and social media. We might even consider doing some advertising.



# Tactics

- Events
  - Open house, membership drives, fundraisers, galas
- Community outreach
  - Identify and meet with partners, community leaders
- Media relations
  - Op eds, letters to editor

Now let's look at the tactics we might employ under some strategies.

Events – think about community open houses, membership drives, fundraisers, galas, where the community and business leaders are invited.

With community outreach, what partners does your club or district have, whose mission aligns with yours? Could you meet with them and plan some projects. Could you help each other?

Media relations – could you write a media release about a project, a success story, could you write an op ed or letter to the editor. Check the templates at [Kiwaniis.org/brand/publicity](http://Kiwaniis.org/brand/publicity). Kiwanis has templates for media releases for most projects, and for op eds and letters to the editor. You just fill in the blanks with your club name and details.



# Implementation

- Ready, set, go – set your plan in motion
- Monitor
- Course correct as needed

This is where the fun begins. You've written your plan, made your assignments, now it's time to implement.

Set a timeline to help you monitor everything that's being done, check in on your progress and be ready to course correct if needed. Maybe your social posts aren't getting likes and shares – Work with a team to revamp them, that's what we mean by course correct. If something's not working, fix it.



# Evaluate

- Look at your objectives
- Measure your success
- What worked well?

When it's time to evaluate your plan, begin with your objectives.

You wanted to increase membership by 25 percent. What's your new membership number?

Did you meet it? Did you add members?

Did your events persuade any community members to join? What about school leaders, teachers – were your suggestions that new members could help with new youth clubs persuasive?

What worked well – one-on-one conversations? Social media? Digital advertising? Employ the strategies and tactics that were successful when you work on your next district plan.



# Resources

<https://www.kiwanis.org/clubs/member-resources/media-relations/buzz-builder>

<https://www.kiwanis.org/clubs/member-resources/communications/communication-tools>

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