

TIP SHEET:

Using Posters



Posters are an important way of getting information to the community. You can use them:

- to mobilize people to support your cause
- to advertise a meeting or specific event
- to popularize your slogans and messages

Posters and pamphlets are very useful, especially in areas where there is no easy access to newspapers and radio. It is a direct way of communicating with the public, but it can also be very expensive. Organizations can easily produce posters and pamphlets. It is important that you clarify the aim of the resource, the target audience and goals.

Design

The target audience sees posters for only a few seconds – usually as they drive or walk past. They can be put up on poles next to busy roads or on walls and windows of shops where passers by can see them.

It is important that they be as large and bold as possible to attract attention and be read easily. Here are some useful tips for producing good posters:

- Make the posters as big as possible. Keep the writing large so it can be read easily from about ten feet away.
- Use as few words as possible (avoid using full sentences). For example “Unite against Poverty” instead of “Let us unite in the fight against Poverty.”
- Don’t put too many words or images on your poster – it may be beautiful, but if the design is too busy important information may not get through to the audience.
- Use bright colours if you can afford it – it will make your poster stand out and attract more attention.
- Be sure the poster is easily recognized as belonging to your organization; use your logo, colours or the abbreviation of your organization’s name.
- Posters are generally expensive to print; an alternative is to make them yourself with coloured markers, pen or paint. To minimize printing costs, one letter-sized original can be designed and photocopied.
- Make your first rough draft and get someone to check the spelling and to proofread it carefully. Spelling mistakes and other errors look very unprofessional.

Purpose:

- Decide on the purpose of your poster, how much money you can spend and how many posters you need. This will help you know how many to produce, what quality you can afford and what method of printing to use.
- Decide exactly what content you want on it. Develop a basic design and get someone who can use a computer to do the layout and print a copy – the printer can enlarge it to fit the paper size you choose.
- Make your final copy and take it to the printers, or organize a working group to hand-make your posters.

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Posting

- In many areas you have to get permission from your local municipality before you can put up posters. Get a copy of the rules in your area and inquire what needs to be done to ensure that your posters are not removed.
- For posters that you want to stick to walls you can buy glue or make your own by mixing flour and water. Use a paint roller and put a thin layer of glue on the wall and stick on the poster.
- For posters that you want to hang on poles you will need clear packing tape. Mount the poster on the pole by taping the top and bottom edges.

Distribution

- Make maps of where the best roads are where people are most likely to see your posters. Good positions are where traffic slows down, like at stop signs and intersections, main roads, busy shops, bus and taxi ranks and railway stations.
- Organize a team of people in your group to put up posters, they can get to know the area and learn the best sites.
- Put up a few posters in a row rather than just one. This gives people in passing cars and buses a better chance to read the whole poster. It also attracts more attention.
- In some areas it is better to put your posters very high on the poles, as it prevents people taking them down easily. You may need to use a ladder for this.
- If your posters get damaged, take them down or repair them quickly so that you don't create a bad impression and your message still gets across.
- After your event, take your posters down.

Advocacy in Action!

Important Decision From the CRTC – Knowledge = Power!

Posting and disseminating information to the public is a form of advocacy in itself, because it educates people on their rights. The following is an example from the National Anti-Poverty Organization (NAPO) concerning phone companies and the right of customers to NOT have their phones disconnected. Posters with information like this were seen on telephone poles in cities such as Ottawa, telling consumers about the ruling.

According to a CRTC decision made May 11, 2004, phone companies can no longer stop local service because of failure to pay all monthly local and long distance charges. Companies like Bell Canada, Telus, Aliant, MTS, NWTel and SaskTel cannot disconnect or threaten to disconnect local calling for non payment when the customer has made sufficient partial payment to cover the outstanding money owed from the local telephone charge portion of the bill. In other words, you can't be cut off local service because of failure to pay long distance and other non-essential charges provided adequate payment on local service is made. Sometimes a family member or friend of the subscriber runs up charges for long distance or other non-essential telephone services that threaten the ability of the family to keep its local telephone service. This decision does not wipe out that debt but simply prevents such a situation from potentially cutting off families from local telephone service.

NAPO, along with the Public Interest Advocacy Centre (PIAC) and a number of other groups, first raised this issue with the CRTC in 2002. Our thanks to PIAC for all their hard work on this submission. If you would like more information on the ruling, contact PIAC at (613) 562-4002.

National Anti-Poverty Organization www.napo-onap.ca

Advocacy Allies! The Public Advocacy Interest Centre

PAIC is a non-profit organization that provides legal and research services on behalf of consumer interests, and, in particular, vulnerable consumer interests, concerning the provision of important public services. Telecommunications is an issue that they have tackled, and have fought against the removal of public payphones, and eliminating phonelessness in Canada. Visit www.piac.ca for more information. This website is available in English only.