

Marketing Your NCAAW

Your marketing plan is your map to how, when, and where you are going to let the campus and community know about your NCAAW programs. It is crucial to inform your potential audience about activities as far in advance as possible. You will want to bombard them with information concerning NCAAW, and you will have to make your program seem fun, interesting and more attractive than the myriad of other options available on a college campus on any given night of the week! Your marketing plan must be well thought out before you order that first poster.

1. Target your potential audience. Identify your target population and brainstorm what type of advertising might capture the attention of those students. Be aware that it is most effective to get the information out by using a mix of traditional and non-traditional advertising methods. Yes, do the flyers, but also chalk sidewalks and use costume characters to deliver your publicity! Have someone parachute into your football game! Consistent themes, colors, and logos will help show the far-reaching impact of your week's events.

2. Identify all the media that will be valuable to get the word out. Find out about deadlines and costs. For example, how much lead time does the campus or local newspaper need to run an ad or press release and how much does advertising space and printing cost? Create a calendar with your committee so you won't miss any deadlines. Be sure your promotion activities are in line with your available budget. Make an appointment with the campus graphics and public relations department and integrate your committee's ideas with their expertise.

3. Determine a schedule and assign specific tasks. Make sure the deadlines and tasks that you have assigned are reasonable and reachable. Use a backward planning method of setting up your promotional campaign. In other words, start with the opening date of your week, work your way backwards on the calendar. If you are ordering educational or promotional materials to distribute, be sure that you do so in plenty of time. Record on your calendar the expected arrival date. By doing this, even if the atmosphere gets very hectic, the details will not be forgotten. Assign one individual to monitor the calendar on a daily basis.

4. Make sure your sponsors are well publicized in your materials. Be generous in sharing credit for the week's activities. Consider getting an inexpensive banner that features your NCAAW theme and lists the sponsors of your activities. Have this banner at all of your events.

5. Stay on schedule. Assign one individual to oversee each step and make certain everyone follows through with assigned responsibilities.

6. Keep careful records of all publicity ordered. Be meticulous in approving any artwork before it is printed.



Ways to Attract an Audience

- 1. Send personal invitations to people using campus mail or email.** Target important groups and individuals who you want to attend. If you have time, you should follow up with a phone call. Maybe ask these VIPs to perform some task at the event, like introducing speakers or events, or helping out at an information table.
- 2. Make personal presentations at group meetings and ask for support.** This works great at fraternities and sororities, RA staff meetings, student government meetings, and so forth. This also gives people a chance to ask questions. Make sure the people presenting the meeting announcements are dynamic and well-spoken. It also helps to bring giveaways to these meetings, such as highlighters or magnets.
- 3. Ask the local pizza or sub delivery shop to act as a sponsor.** Tape your event advertising, including health and safety messages, to each delivery box that goes out during NCAAW.
- 4. Ask professors to give extra credit to students who attend events.** Two extra points on a midterm could certainly bring some students out to hear a speaker!
- 5. Give incentives and rewards to those committee members who can bring five friends to any event!** Do the same for RA's, fraternity pledge educators, and so on.
- 6. Involve residence life.** See if RA's can get programming credits for bringing their floor members to your events.
- 7. Use table tents in campus dining areas to advertise your events.** Be sure to get the proper approval first, however!
- 8. Always have a specific campus group as the headline sponsor of a particular event.** That always helps to boost attendance. Make sure their membership has a lot to do at the event as well!

More marketing tips are available at www.bacchusnetwork.org/positive-image.asp

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