Marketing   
your industry program



*Practical Tips for   
Program Coordinators and   
Committee Members*



# Introduction

***The need for publicity***

Whatever the longevity of an industry program and however successful, it requires ongoing publicity to keep it in the focus of as wide a range of interested parties as possible. This includes all stakeholders, from parents, to students, fellow teachers and employers. In addition to maintaining support, the net needs to be continuously cast for more or additional involvement and participation. Local ownership is the key to sustainability.

When publicising your school-industry program, there are two main components to consider.

The Promotional Vehicle, including:

* brochure/leaflet
* poster
* newsletter
* meeting
* presentation
* award night
* media article
* website

The Audience:

* suitability of the vehicle
* suitability of the message/what is the purpose?
* suitability of timing

***Planning ahead***

It is a good idea to sit down with your management committee to agree on a publicity/information strategy. It might be useful to develop some kind of promotional campaign or a timetable for the forthcoming school-year in which certain publicity material is developed and events held which help to publicise and therefore push the aims and achievements of the program.

It is also sensible to have some promotional material that is always available to both hand out to prospective stakeholders, to ‘badge the program’, and to raise its profile within the school and the wider community. Some of this promotional material could be very general in nature, appealing to anyone interested in the aims of school-industry programs or structured workplace learning. Some of your material will need to appeal to a particular audience you are targeting for a specific reason, for example to inform parents of prospective program students that such study is recognised as part of the Secondary School Certificate.

To determine what vehicle to use and the format (both the look and the content) to be adopted, you need to understand the particular audience you are promoting to.

* What are their needs?
* Concerns?
* Prejudices?
* Expectations?

Simultaneously, you need to think of what you and your management committee are hoping to gain for your program. These two issues have a direct impact on the style or form of promotion used. The customer-service angle needs to be constantly re-examined and catered for in your promotional campaign.

A working motto to be adopted in your promotional endeavours is ‘Keep it short and simple’. This applies to both the message and the format used to convey it. This principle impacts on budgetary considerations as well, which should be kept low and not infringe on the program’s running costs. Keeping this principle in mind, your promotional strategy need not rely on or include ‘gimmicky’ ideas. You also won’t be seen as wasting program money!

Whatever publicity methods you decide to adopt, it is important to remember that one of the best sources of promotion is the people involved with your program already. If you have a sound program with efficient management and good communication, you will be keeping all your key customers/stakeholders (including your students) happy. This in turn will create walking advertisements. Never underestimate the value of ‘word of mouth’.