



Optimist International Public Relations Handbook

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Introduction

Welcome to the new Optimist International Public Relations Kit. The information contained in this document is part of a public relations kit designed to give Optimist International a system of easy-to-use design and media products that can be tailored to promote club, zone, or district activities.

This kit will provide the knowledge and steps needed to promote Optimist Clubs, Zones, and Districts as well as our international organization. It will supply the user with an array of products such as print, PowerPoint, Internet, video, and audio to assist them in promoting the Optimist organization brand at every level in the ever-changing high-technology world of today. And best of all, this kit has been designed with the layperson in mind. You don't have to be an expert. From writing a news release to planning a major event, this public relations kit will help you get the job done.

Section 1: Navigating the Media World

The explosion of the Internet and social media has profoundly affected how people get their news and information worldwide.

In today's world, due to the exponential growth of the Internet, the approach to communications has shifted, creating new ways to communicate and share information using the available new technologies. The way we share information has changed forever and for Optimist International to communicate successfully we must learn to use these technologies more efficiently and effectively. The conventional way of communicating has given way to digital online information-sharing technologies requiring a whole new approach and set of tools to compete for people's attention, and time.

A whole new brand of social media is available to the public relations practitioner, and those who have not embraced their use will find themselves left behind in this new information age. Newspapers, television, and radio stations have had to revamp the way they gather information and report the news. At the same time, Internet technologies have opened limitless access to both general and targeted audiences. Being able to employ these new technologies is critical to sustaining a healthy and effective communications program for Optimist International both on the local level and worldwide.

To be competitive and reach our targeted audiences Optimist International must develop a communications/public relations action plan that incorporates the use of today's technologies.

However, we must keep in mind that while the tools have and will continue to change, the basic communications and public relations techniques remain the same.

So, What is Public Relations?

Public relations (PR) is the practice of managing and disseminating information from an organization to the public to affect their public perception. In essence, all organizations have a relationship with the public in some manner or other. Understand that public relations and publicity are quite different. Public relations is controlled internally, whereas publicity is not controlled, but contributed by external sources.

In developing any public relations plan we must first determine who our public is and how we relate to them. Optimist International has four basic publics or audiences we must communicate with as public relations practitioners. These include but are not limited to:

- Our membership
- The public
- The media
- Sponsors and partners

Also, depending on specific programs and activities, audiences can be narrowed down further to specific target audiences, such as participants in our oratorical and golf programs.

How we communicate with our public depends on the specific audience and the message we craft.

Summarily, public relations is about an organization's reputation and public image. Every member of Optimist International has a role in communicating our image to the various audiences we engage. The perception of who we are and what we stand for is determined by the positive and negative things that are seen and heard about us at every level of our organization. The fact is perception is the reality for most people.

If Optimist International is to succeed in its mission it must maximize the familiarity and reputation of its brand. This is all part of what is referred to in the advertising world as "branding". The primary objective is to have a positive familiarity and reputation that immediately comes to mind when you hear a name. For example, what is the first thing you think of when you hear the word McDonald's, Amazon, Walmart, or Apple? Now apply this same exercise to Optimist International. Our members know us, but each member has a different perception of Optimist International based on their experience and knowledge. And even after being in existence for over a hundred years most of the public has no idea who we are or what we stand for. If we are to survive, we must change this.

An organization's brand involves several factors such as its character, integrity, and overall performance. It is made up of every contact our members, club leadership and

staff have with our various audiences. The Optimist International brand is a composite of the following:

- Optimist international's history of dealing with people
- Its attitude toward its membership
- Its external attitude toward community involvement and responsibility
- Its relationship to the media, news releases, and interviews
- Its publications both internally and externally
- How it promotes our brand and its value proposition

So, with that said you might wonder what is the image of Optimist International today? Well, it depends on whom you ask. In communities where Optimist Clubs are active and involved in the community, they are probably best known for their service activities with the community's youth. Whereas in communities where clubs are not very active little is known about them. This is also prevalent in large metropolitan areas where the competition for volunteers is fierce, and our audiences have a lot of choices as to where they might want to volunteer their resources. The bottom line is if we are to succeed as an Organization, Optimist International must do a better job promoting its brand and selling our value proposition to all our audiences.

Responsibilities of a Club Public Relations Chair

A club's public relations chair wears many hats because they are responsible for the external communications of the club. This responsibility involves several disciplines such as marketing, publicity, media relations, and other image-building tasks. It is this responsibility that makes the public relations task one of the most important functions of a club's marketing outreach program. Essentially, this job is to keep the community your club serves informed and enlightened, and to persuade and convince the various audiences residing there of the value and benefits of becoming involved in Optimism.

The first task confronting a club's public relations chair is to determine, if they don't already know, the image their club projects within their community. Does it project an involved and active image or one of disinterest and inactivity? As the public relations chair, you must be proactive in monitoring and understanding how your club and Optimist International are perceived by the media, business organizations, and the public at large. Also, you must make sure you have a thorough understanding of how your membership and the community your club serves feel about your club and its

Optimist mission. Understanding how your club and Optimist International is perceived gives you the ability to formulate a plan of action to reinforce or change how your club, as well as the Optimist International brand, is received both by your membership and the community at large.

The knowledge you will gain from this exercise will give you the insight you will need to alter or maintain your club's and Optimist International's image and communicate our mission to our target audiences within the community. Also, achieving a better understanding of your club's image will assist you in developing and focusing your communications and message(s) to achieve the Optimist mission by convincing club members and community members to join and support our organization.

Good public relations begin with a club's leadership establishing policies and procedures that are ethical, honest, logical, and in keeping with the principles of the Optimist Mission. With the policies and practices in hand, the public relations chair and his or her committee can promote them to the public for recognition, understanding, and the ability to clarify any misconceptions about who and what Optimist International is.

As a public relations chair, you will be expected to become engaged in and promote the following basic services:

Advice and Counsel Club Leadership

As public relations chair you will be expected to advise your club's leadership on the impact policy decisions will have on the media, community, and club members.

Developing a Communications Network

Information is power and keeping your club's membership as well as the public informed about your club's events, activities, and policies through the various communication tools such as newsletters, speeches, press releases, news media, social media, and personal contact is job one for a club's public relations chair and committee.

Research

To assist a club in managing its affairs more effectively and efficiently the club's public relations chair and committee is responsible for identifying, evaluating, and communicating information to the club's leadership about what is going on within

the community they serve. This will allow the club to become more agile in its response to the community's needs.

Promotion/Marketing

Developing and executing a variety of programs and activities that will enable your club to promote the Optimist mission and brand to develop pride and ownership from its members and acceptance by the various audiences residing in the community.

The Optimist International Public Relations Model

The Optimist International Public Relations Model has been designed as a three-step program. From the International organization down to the club the Public Relations mission has been divided into three separate, but related tasks involving media relations, internal information, and community/external relations.

Media Relations

Making a connection with the public, our audience is a crucial step in the success of any private, corporate, or nonprofit entity. In this day and time, there are a variety of ways to disseminate information, but the media offers the best opportunity to reach the largest number of people with your message.

The question is how to use and maximize its effectiveness! The key to effective media relations is building a good working relationship with the various media in your area of influence. Be patient, this will not happen overnight. It takes careful planning and persistence. Understand this is a mutual relationship built on trust and honesty. You want them to call you when they have questions about volunteerism or Optimism, and you have a person to contact to provide a local angle to stories regarding club activities and the Optimist International organization. Building these relationships takes real time and effort, but the payoff will make it all worthwhile.

Internal Information

Internal communications are vital to having a strong, viable, and well-led club. It is essential you keep your members informed using communication tools such as newsletters, the Internet, emails, and social media of what is going on in your club, zone, district, or Optimist International as well as pass on any local or national policy that may be important to all members.

You cannot assume that just because our members pay their dues every quarter, they understand what the Optimist International mission is all about. Keeping your members informed of all the issues is a critical step in keeping them motivated, involved, and active at all levels. Retention of a club's members depends on them being kept in the communications loop. If we want them to stay and renew their commitment to the Optimist organization, we must make sure they are aware of what's going on and feel an integral part of it.

Community/External Relations

If your club is to maximize its effectiveness in achieving its mission and being a force of positive change in your community it must have an effective community outreach program. Whether you are inviting members of the community to participate in an activity or event, launching a membership drive, or conducting an information campaign, you will have to reach out to people who are not members of your club. To accomplish this will involve coordination with the various media resources in your community and using all your other communication tools to assist you in contacting local businesses, elected officials, schools, and religious leaders as well as other civic and nonprofit groups. There may also be the opportunity of securing sponsorships for your events.

While the club's president will most often be the primary contact and spokesperson for the club's community activities and events, the public relations chair should be prepared to advise the club's leadership on specific issues and be a spokesperson if the need arises. There should also be a designated person who can present the Optimist International story in speeches and presentations to various community groups and organizations. Having a strong external outreach program is essential for maintaining good community relations.

Continuity is Imperative

Building relationships is critical to the success and sustainability of an effective public relations program. Your club must develop and maintain relationships with the local media, various officials, and the Optimist International staff. However, once contacts are made it is imperative for you to nurture and maintain continuity for these relationships to be used to their fullest potential. Always remember relationships thrive on the give-and-take dynamic.

In a volunteer organization, it is difficult to burden one individual with this much responsibility for any length of time. So, be sure to try and spread these responsibilities around to several individuals, allowing them to specialize in various areas, such as political, business, religious, or media relations.

An excellent tool to assist you in maintaining your continuity in the relationship you make in your community is to keep a public relations log or spreadsheet for your club or district. This document should be readily available and accessible to anyone who has the responsibility for making contacts in the community. The information collected should include contact names, addresses, emails, telephone numbers, the deadlines for various media, the procedures for submitting articles, and public service announcements (PSAs), and the contact history of the key individuals involved in your public relations plan.

Planning a Successful Public Relations Campaign

When a club plans an event, for the most part, those members organizing it will know every detail, where every table and chair will be placed, and the timetable for when everything will happen down to the minute. But when it comes to publicizing the event, many times it is done at the last minute many times to the detriment of the success of the project.

In launching a public relations campaign, the first step is to develop an annual calendar and to make sure public relations/promotion is part of every planning meeting agenda. Every aspect of the planned event should consider how it will impact public relations as it is applied.

You will find in the Event Planning section of this public relations kit the means to develop a comprehensive package that includes a publicity strategy based on deadlines and submission requirements for the various media resources you plan to use.

Specialized news events and campaigns will require you to include an objective statement and a detailed outline as to how you plan to reach your target audience(s) with your specific message. You will also need to state your goal or goals and present a strategy for achieving them. This public relations kit has been designed to assist you in performing these tasks. We encourage you to use the many materials available in this public relations kit, such as press releases, speeches, message points, card templates, slide presentations, and much, much more.

Documenting Activity and Results

As your event and media campaign progress, be sure you document your activities and the results. This is important for two reasons. First, you will have a record of the event for yourself, and second, you will have one for the individual or individuals who will be responsible for future events. Record anything you think might be of use in planning for future events, such as

- Essential contacts
- Things you wish you had done and opportunities that were missed.
- Who from the media attended and who did not?
- What went as expected and what did not?

Evaluating Your Success and Failure

During the documentation stage, make sure you are honest and forthright in how the event turned out. Get feedback from your attendees as well as your members. Make sure you ask hard questions and encourage honest answers. For example:

- Did your club achieve its goals and objectives?
- Was our message well received and did we draw the target audience(s) we went after?
- Did the media publicize your message get the job done? Did they connect with your target audience(s)?
- How did your audience(s) react to your message? Was the reaction as anticipated?

Once you have completed your evaluation and you have documented everything, make sure you share this knowledge with others. Make sure you mentor and involve other members of your club in the process to maintain continuity and a smooth transition for next year's event(s).

In Conclusion

Public relations is a powerful tool. If used properly it will enhance the operation and effectiveness of your club's outreach program within the community it serves. For this reason alone, public relations is a vital component in the functioning of your club. Every member must be made aware of the role they play. They are within themselves a

walking, talking individual public relations entity. Public relations will impact the operations of your club, zone, and district both internally and externally. We must make sure we maximize its benefits.

Section 2: Understanding the Tools of Public Relations

We have developed this public relations kit to provide you with the basic tools, concepts, and ideas you will need to mount an effective public relations and marketing outreach campaign regardless of your experience and expertise.

Our primary objective is to assist you in establishing an effective public relations and marketing strategy for your club or district. By understanding how to use these tools and how the various communications channels work your club or district should be able to mount an effective public relations and marketing campaign that will successfully expand the Optimist mission and its brand. Successful media coverage increases your club's and Optimist International's public outreach educating your key audiences about who we are, what we do, and what the Optimist brand stands for.

The Basic Tools

Optimist International has developed a series of templates as well as printed and broadcast materials for clubs and districts to use in their outreach to the public and the local media for publication and broadcast. These materials promote Optimist programs and activities; the impact they have on youth and the community and the personal benefits optimism brings to its members. Professionally produced by Optimist International, these materials are available to our clubs, districts, and members for a minimal charge or free upon request. They include the following:

- Club and district marketing kits
- Ads, flyers, and other promotional materials
- Videos
- Banners
- PSAs
- Elevator speeches
- Drive time radio spots
- Press releases, op-eds, and letters to the editor templates

The Value of Public Relation Tools

The use of these public relations tools provides Optimist International

with the foundation to speak with one brand voice as well as provide each of our clubs and districts with a unified and professional presence in the volunteer marketplace. The media, social media, websites, and publishers want materials that are professional, eye-catching, well-written, and beautifully designed. In today's fast-paced publishing and media world editors and reporters are looking for more than just a good story. They want videos, quality images, great designs, and web links that can easily be uploaded to their websites and social media platforms. Everyone is looking for the most dynamic, visually exciting, impactful, and great-sounding spots they can feature to bring them more subscribers and viewers. Armed with these tools and materials a club or district public relations chair has a distinct advantage over other organizations that might approach the various media outlets in your community. These tools will assist you in building the media relations you will need to become the go-to person for volunteer concerns in your community. Media relationships are the key to getting your club or district recognized. In addition, professionally designed and produced materials that are well written and already packaged for the user will make your job as club or district public relations or marketing chair much more efficient and less stressful.

Optimist International's marketing department and its Communications and Marketing Committee have developed design templates, ads, PSAs, and other promotional materials a club or district can customize and download from the Optimist International website. In addition, with the proper lead time, staff can develop custom materials for little or no cost to the club or district.

A Variety of Public Relations Materials

The Optimist International marketing team has developed a variety of public relations materials for the promotion of the Optimist brand including programs, activities, and the benefits of Optimism. In developing your public relations and marketing strategies be aware that what works for one situation or audience may not work for another. In anticipation of this Optimist International has v

Developed a variety of media products in different sizes, lengths, formats, and content to accommodate most of your publishing and media needs. This should arm you with the proper materials you will need when approaching the various media outlets in your community to mount a proper and effective public relations and marketing campaign. Basic written copy for radio spots is included to enable outlets who prefer to produce their own custom spots with their personnel and voice talent.

Developing a Marketing Strategy

Your public relations efforts will be more effective if you are able to get your message printed, featured on the internet, or spread on social media. Since most of your public relations and marketing efforts will be focused on the communities you serve, developing a relationship with the local media will be a must. The most successful way to achieve this is by personal contact. Emails might work, but keep in mind the various media outlets, such as radio, television, and newspapers are inundated with hundreds of such correspondence every day of the week. Experience has shown the best way for a club or district to get its public service materials on a broadcast or publishing schedule short of paying for it, is through personal contact with the key individual(s) responsible for the broadcast or publishing content.

The key point to remember is that nothing is more effective in getting your information published or broadcast than establishing a strong relationship through personal contact with the various reporters, editors, and broadcast directors in your community.

To assist a club or district in developing an effective media kit you will find in this section basic informational sheets for use in a club or district media kit. Every club or district should have at least five media kits ready to be distributed on short notice. These materials should include background information on your specific club or district listing your club and district projects and programs. In addition to printed media kits, you should also create a digital kit for quick and easy transmittal to reporters and editors.

Ads, Flyers, and Posters

The Optimist International Public Relations Team has developed a series of print ads, flyers, and posters for club and district use. Each of these items is provided with editing fields allowing a club or district to insert their contact information along with specialized messages where appropriate. Just enter the information, save the file, and it's ready to be printed or used in a publication. Use the flyers as handouts at events; place them on windshields; run them in local newspapers and publications; develop them into column-sized bookmarks as handouts or place them on local bulletin boards and in the windows of local businesses. The only limitation is your ingenuity and imagination.

Key Message Points

In order for Optimist International and your club to speak with one voice, every club and district should have on-hand a set of key, predetermined message points allowing you to be more strategic when speaking with the media – not only to provide information about your club’s activities but also illustrate how these activities fit into the Optimist International mission. These are universal bullet points outlining the organization's global mission, the purposes of an Optimist Club, and the benefits of membership. This information will come in handy when preparing to speak with the media, business groups, and other organizations. The Optimist International Public Relations Team will constantly keep these message points updated so clubs and districts may download them from the Optimist International website, www.optimist.org.

Before contacting the media, it is imperative to be well prepared and have a few messages already prepared to demonstrate a strong sense of whom we want to communicate these answers too. Listed below are some basic guidelines to assist you in developing key messages and targeting potential audiences.

- Key messages are the primary points of communication about your Optimist Club and Optimist International to the public.
- In short, key messages are what you want people to know and what you want them to remember about the Optimists.
- Optimist Clubs have several great of resources when developing key messages – the purposes of the Optimist Club, the Optimist Mission Statement, and the Optimist Vision Statement. The ideas and thoughts highlighted in these documents can be easily formatted into several one- or two-line statements on what you want to convey about your club and Optimist International.
- While these documents provide you with the basic information you’ll need to develop your club’s message points, you may want to poll your club’s leadership and members to solicit any additional new points that may be specific to your club’s community service activities.
- Key messages are not only helpful when speaking with the media; they can also be extremely useful when recruiting members or looking for sponsorships or partners. During events where prospective members are being entertained these

message points can be very helpful in outlining the benefits of becoming involved as a member of your club and Optimist International.

- In addition to key message points for your club and Optimist International, you should also develop key points for each Optimist event. These messages will be of great assistance when answering the following media questions:
 - What can you tell me about this event?
 - What impact will this event have on the local youth, their families, and the community?
 - What is the Optimists' involvement concerning this issue?

Use of Proclamations

Proclamations are an easy way to garner positive news coverage... Experience shows that preparing a proclamation for a mayor, county executive or other government officials significantly increases the possibility of having it signed and generating favorable publicity for your club or district. Proclamations are also very useful in recognizing the accomplishment and exploits of our fellow members. The following examples suggest proclamations that can be used for a variety of events or recognition opportunities. Using these as guides will help you craft proclamations for nearly any occasion or event.

Example #1 – Optimist Day

Proclamation

City of _____/office of the mayor

Optimist Day

The First Thursday of Every February

WHEREAS, Volunteers working with young people who are our joy of today and are our hope for tomorrow, are exuberant representatives of the potential to be reached and dreams to come true. They are also unbounded in their enthusiasm to use their own talent, skills, and hard work to make a difference in other's lives, and;

WHEREAS, Members of Optimist International will celebrate Optimist Day throughout the world on the first Thursday of every February to promote their efforts in helping and recognizing the young people that make a difference in their communities and who will encourage a greater exchange of ideas between young people and adults, and;

WHEREAS, There are 2,400 Optimist Clubs, with more than 70,000 members, in Optimist International and Optimist members throughout the world that carry out 6,500 service projects that serve six million young people a year;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that I, _____, Mayor of the City of _____, issue this Proclamation declaring the first Thursday of every February as Optimist Day in the City of _____. May this day instill pride in our city's Optimists for all their accomplishments and for the difference they make in others' lives.

Signed

Example #2 – Special Member Recognition

Proclamation

WHEREAS, The strength and vitality of the _____ Optimist Club depends on the efforts and dedication of its volunteer members; and

WHEREAS, The mission of Optimist International is to provide hope and a positive vision to bring out the best in youth and its members thereby contributing to the betterment of communities; and

WHEREAS, There are unique and special members who rise to the occasion in times of challenge thereby inspiring other members and impacting the Club and its members in a positive and meaningful way;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, _____ is recognized and honored for his/her dedication and commitment to the _____ Optimist Club in the _____ District of Optimist International.

Signed

Example #3 – Sponsor/Business Recognition

Proclamation

WHEREAS, *The strength and vitality of the _____ Optimist Club depends on the efforts and support of the organizations and businesses in the community it serves; and*

WHEREAS, *The mission of Optimist International is to provide hope and a positive vision to bring out the best in youth and its members thereby contributing to the betterment of communities; and*

WHEREAS, *There are unique and special organizations and businesses that rise to the occasion in times of challenge to provide support and services in a positive and meaningful way;*

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, _____ *is recognized and honored for their commitment to and support of the _____ Optimist Club.*

The proclamation examples shown here are basic templates you can use as-is or adapt to meet your specific needs or local requirements. You will also find many municipalities have their own standard proclamation for special events and recognizing accomplishments. In most cases, they are willing to make edits to their formats using your recommended text. Be sure to begin your request for a proclamation well in advance to allow enough time to process your request.

Section 3: How to Give a Killer Elevator Speech

An elevator speech is like a Twitter version of your business proposal. Although you may have to use more than 140 characters to get your idea across, the bottom line is to keep it simple, short, and sweet.

The average English word has 5.5 characters with spaces, so a 140-character tweet uses approximately 25 words. To communicate your ideas during your elevator speech (based on a 30-second elevator ride) should use no more than three tweets' worth of information or 75 words.

Studies show that most human beings speak about 120 to 200 words per minute. A good elevator speech incorporates a slightly slower than average speaking speed of about 75 words during your 30-second presentation.

The key to a great elevator speech is not to wing it and find yourself stumbling through a rambling, improvised speech that has little or no impact on your prospect.

Create and practice your elevator speech until it rolls right off your tongue when the next opportunity presents itself. Being prepared demonstrates your confidence and passion for our organization and its mission.

Spreading the Optimist message and sharing the benefits of becoming an Optimist is a full-time job. Always practice what we preach – have a smile on your face, a membership application in your pocket, and be on the lookout for an opportunity to talk Optimism to the millions of prospects we interact with every day.

The first step in developing your elevator speech is the use of a simple outline. There are a lot of examples available, but here is the one I use:

- Introduce yourself as an Optimist
- Present the Optimist value proposition (the benefit of being an Optimist member)
- What Optimists do
- Offer a Call to Action

This outline is just a guide. Feel free to adapt it to create a natural-sounding speech that reflects your personality and presentation style. Practice your presentation out loud, tweaking it as you go to make sure your phrasing is natural, personal, precise, and gets your point across in approximately 75 words.

Here are a few examples of simple, to-the-point elevator speeches:

Example #1

Hi, I'm John Doe from Optimist International. Would you like to make a difference? Give me a moment of your time and I'll show you how to improve your community and become a happier, healthier, and more successful person. Optimists' hands-on community service and helping children is a steppingstone to bringing out the best in yourself. Be my guest at one of our local events and I'll introduce you to this life-changing experience.

Example #2

Hi, I'm Jane Doe from Optimist International. Would you like to make your community a better place to live and become a happier, healthier, and more successful person? For over a century Optimist International has provided individuals, like yourself, the opportunity to improve children's lives, serve their community, and bring out the best in themselves. Be my guest at one of our local events and I'll introduce you to this life-changing experience.

Example #3

Hi, I'm John Doe from Optimist International. Would you like to be a force of positive change, making your community a better place to live and becoming a happier, healthier, and more successful person? For over a century Optimist International has provided individuals the opportunity to improve children's lives, serve their community, and bring out the best in themselves. Be my guest at one of our local events and participate in this life-changing experience.

Example #4

A person sees your Optimist pin, shirt, or paraphernalia

Thanks for asking, I am part of Optimist International, a worldwide organization that helps save children's lives and gives them direction through positive mentoring and guidance. We give socially conscience people the opportunity to give back to their community. I'd like to discuss this more with you now or at a time of your convenience. Do you have a business card, or can I have your contact information so we can set up a time to talk further?

Section 4: Developing a Public Relations Campaign

Sometimes Issuing press advisories or press releases will not generate the impact or media coverage you desire. In these situations, you may need to initiate a multi-media public relations campaign.

There is an old saying, ‘Fail to prepare then prepare to fail’. And when it comes to mounting a public information or public relations campaign no truer words could be written. A successful public information campaign must be well researched and planned. If you expect to achieve your marketing and public relations objectives, you need a plan that outlines the following:

- **Objective(s)** – What do you want to achieve?
- **Message** – What do you want to communicate?
- **Marketing Strategy** – What are you going to do?
- **The Audience(s)** – Who will your campaign target?
- **Measure Results** – How will you evaluate your success?

With these agreed upon you can begin to plan your campaign.

Depending on the audience(s) you desire to reach out to over a specified period of time careful consideration should be given to your campaign strategy. For example, if your focus is on increasing your club’s membership your campaign might involve advertising, PSAs, press releases, radio and television spots, and WOW or NOW events to showcase what your club does in the community and the benefits of being a member of Optimist International.

Another public relations campaign might involve Optimist International’s Oratorical Contest and the World Oratorical Championships. In this case, the objective of the campaign would be to inform the schools, teachers, administrators, students, and their parents about the competitions and the rewards and opportunities involved.

No matter the reason, a successful public relations campaign requires a careful, well-thought-out strategy put together well in advance, with clearly stated objectives, and the desired outcome. One critical aspect of developing your strategy is to have specific benchmarks set up to measure the progress and success of your marketing efforts.

Define Your Objectives

Begin your planning by clarifying your objectives. Define and write them down being as precise as possible. What will your campaign be designed to achieve?

- Build goodwill with your members, the public, and the community
- Promote the benefits of being involved in Optimism
- Create, reinforce, and raise Optimist International's brand awareness in the community you serve.
- Create positive perceptions of your club, Optimist International, and the services and benefits we provide
- Expand the services of your club and its impact on your community
- Generate new members

Once you have established what your marketing and public relations campaign will try to achieve, you can begin to construct your public information campaign based on your agreed-upon objectives and goals

Set Clear and Decisive Goals

To affect a successful informational campaign, you must clearly articulate your goals. Unlike objectives which are qualitative, goals should be quantitative. Most importantly make sure your goals and objectives are measurable. Be sure to establish targets and time frames. It is recommended when you develop your goals, to use the SMART method. Each goal should be:

- **Specific** – what is the ideal outcome you are trying to create or achieve?
- **Measurable** – How will you measure the success of the campaign?
- **Achievable** – How you will accomplish your goals within the constraints of your resources, such as manpower or budget?
- **Realistic** – Are the goals you set sensible in scope and achievable?
- **Time-based** – How long do you have to accomplish your goals and objectives?

Who is Your Audience(s) – Your Target Market

In executing a public relations campaign everything is determined by your target audience(s). Identify whom you are trying to reach, what their interests are, and

where they reside. Armed with this information you will then be able to create a blueprint for your entire campaign that should include the following:

- With whom do you want to communicate?
- What is the key message(s) you will send?
- Which media platforms will you use?
- How will you gain and maintain your member's and public's trust?
- What will be the theme of your campaign, what images will you use, and what story? will you tell

Once you agree on your target audience(s) you should begin creating your public relations/marketing plan, when you plan to launch it, and what will be the message. It can be especially helpful to take the time to investigate the outreach of other similar organizations to give you an idea of which media channels to best use as well as the messages you should send.

Developing an Awesome and Impactful Message

The message you develop is the single most powerful element of your campaign. Do it correctly and it will drive engagement with your target audience(s) and generate media attention for your club and the Optimist International Brand. Do it wrong and the media will ignore you and your audience(s) will disappear.

A standout message:

- Must be newsworthy
- Have a clear call to action
- Get your audience(s) involved
- Be informative
- Be different

Be Newsworthy

To have any success with the media the message you craft for your campaign needs to be newsworthy. It must be subjective, current, and catch the media's attention.

Make sure it is relevant to the media's audience and explains the impact or benefit it will have on their lives. This is where your public relations and marketing efforts must be creative and imaginative.

Have a Clear Call to Action

To gain a strong and impactful message make sure it is easily understood and has clear instructions for your audience(s) to follow.

Show your audience how completing an action will be of benefit to them – and how easy it will be for them to become involved.

Involve Your Audience

Audience involvement is the key to the success of any informational campaign. It provides them with the opportunity to feel more connected with the Optimist Mission and gives you the benefit of brand recognition as they spread your message across their individual networks.

Be Instructive

With your information campaign don't miss the opportunity to educate your audience(s). Be aware the most successful campaigns do not preach, instead they engage and inform by raising awareness and opening minds to the Optimist Mission and the benefits our organization offers its members.

Dare to be Different

Don't be afraid to think big and make a splash. People tend to respond to campaigns that are heartfelt, creative, and innovative.

Research the Media Collateral

To mount an effective public relations campaign, you will require a variety of media collateral depending on the story you are trying to tell and the specific media you are targeting. Be sure to have your collateral pieces on hand so you will be able to supply

them on demand. The following is a list of the types of collateral pieces you may require for a campaign:

- Press releases and articles
- Appearing as a source of media stories
- Member success stories
- Letters to the editor
- Press conferences and interviews
- Radio, television, or podcast appearances
- Social media advertising
- Seminars, workshops, or speaking engagements
- Event sponsorships
- Dare to be Different
- Don't be afraid to think big and make a splash. People tend to respond to campaigns that are heartfelt, creative, and innovative.

The Press Release – Becoming adept at writing a press release is still the key to any successful public relations campaign. It must be a well-crafted, news-ready story that clearly communicates the importance of your campaign and why the media outlets should take notice.

First and foremost a press release must contain news.

Most press releases have 11 sections, so the story flows similarly to a news story. Your press release should include an attention-grabbing headline, descriptive first paragraph, quotes, and boilerplate.

Making the Media Pitch

Although relationships, contacts, and a good media list are very important in working with the media they are not the key to your success in getting media coverage. What matters most is your presentation of your club's story and its newsworthiness. More than anything else this is the key to getting your club's story covered by the local media.

When you meet with the media you must be well prepared. State clearly and succinctly the importance of your campaign and why it will be of interest to their audience.

During your media research make sure you find out who the people are that will evaluate your plan so you will know who to send your pitch to.

Be specific and be sure to personalize everything you send to the media. Media people are extremely busy so don't waste their time with nonessential correspondence. Respect their deadlines and be prompt in responding to them. This will go a long way in helping you build a relationship of trust and help you become one of their go-to people. Anticipate what they will need from you so you will be prepared to give them what they need when they ask for it.

Media Ready Photographs

High-resolution photographs, professionally shot and stylized are a must in the media world. The media outlets are image-led so you should make it a priority to build a library of high-quality images to assist you in telling the story of your campaign.

Action shots stand a better chance of being printed, as opposed to "line-ups" of people simply smiling at the camera. If possible, enliven a simple check or plaque presentation with interesting props or settings (for example, in a park where a playground or walking path will be built with the funds being presented).

These photographs should be prepared in advance to ensure you have a variety of portrait and landscape images available. Keep them in a file you can easily access and share them with the media when requested.

In addition to the photographs be sure you have available your club's and district's logos in a variety of formats, such as EPS, JPG, PNG, etc. Be very selective when providing your logo – Remember the EPS format is for printing. Many times, it is referred to as vector art. The JPG and PNG formats are for the web and internet. They are very low resolution to reduce their size. When used in a printing situation the artwork becomes fuzzy and pixilated.

Video Content

Most news outlets prefer to use video content in the stories they broadcast if it is available. As you prepare your campaign, create a brief video (as short as 30 seconds)

summarizing your story, project, or program, and featuring the major points you want your audience to receive.

Your video does not have to be sophisticated. It can be a combination of photographs, infographics, interviews, and event footage. Keep in mind as you are producing it the objective is to communicate why your campaign is relevant to your audience and what action you want them to take.

Using a Spokesperson

The human voice is a great tool to give impact to your public relations and marketing campaign because it creates an emotional connection with your audience.

It would be advisable for your club or district to have a spokesperson for your campaign. They can be a club officer, chair, district officer, or a member passionate about the story your campaign is seeking to tell.

Human voices make your story more relatable and personal for your audience.

Infographics

Infographics are a great way to simplify and summarize the key points of your campaign's story and make it attractive and easily understandable to your target audience.

In today's busy, digital world attention spans are becoming increasingly short and people are overwhelmed with information. The use of infographics can help your story stand out and increase your campaign's accessibility to your audience.

Marketing Collateral

As your campaign picks up momentum people will become more interested in your club and what you do in the community. The results will be they will want more information. Be sure you are prepared to provide this information with the necessary marketing materials, such as brochures, project information sheets, ads, flyers, website content, and posts on social media channels.

Maximizing Your Media Coverage

Getting media coverage for your club or district can be a very daunting and competitive task, especially in large metropolitan areas. Every organization and business is vying for column space or air time. This makes it extremely important you find a way to stand out from the crowd. Listed below are five tips that will help you rise to the challenge:

- Generate a newsworthy story
- Respect media deadlines
- Create visual appeal
- A knowledgeable and prepared spokesperson
- Hold media briefings

Generate a Newsworthy Story

If you want to improve your chances of generating media coverage the first thing you should do is craft your message as a newsworthy story.

The bottom line is the media's main interest in your club's or district's story or message is whether it will be of interest to their audiences. They want a story that is relevant, subjective, and causes viewers, listeners, and readers to sit up and take notice.

A newsworthy story involves innovation, firsts, changes in behavior, or events and activities that impact people's lives and behavior.

Remember every club has a story. You just have to find it and present it in such a way that it is newsworthy.

Club Storyfinder

Organizational Structure	Your Club's History	Its Community Service	The Value Proposition	Club Members
<p>The Optimist International organizational structure, its unique beginning, and its mission.</p> <p>What makes your Optimist Club special or unique?</p> <p>The autonomy your club has to develop its service programs to meet community needs.</p> <p>How do you raise your funds for service projects and programs?</p> <p>Do you have any special or unique fund raisers? Has your club raised a large amount of funding for an innovative or unique program or project?</p>	<p>When and why was your club founded?</p> <p>What obstacles did you have to overcome in order to establish the club and sustain its viability?</p> <p>The purposes of and Optimist club.</p> <p>Are there any famous or unique individuals in your club?</p>	<p>What does your club do that makes a difference in your community?</p> <p>Does your club do any special or unique projects or programs?</p> <p>A handson organization.</p> <p>What opportunities does it offer its members?</p> <p>How do you raise your funds for service projects and programs?</p>	<p>How Optimist make a difference in the lives of youth?</p> <p>How Optimist make our communities a better place to live?</p> <p>Opportunities for personal growth?</p> <p>How living the Optimist Creed make us a better person.</p> <p>How optimism helps us live happier, healthier, and more productive lives.</p> <p>How Optimist bring out the best in our youth, enhancing their lives and inspiring others.</p>	<p>How has being in your club changed the lives of your members?</p> <p>How has membership in Optimism changed change your members lives?</p> <p>Are there any powerful single interest stories in your club?</p> <p>How has the Optimist mission had an impact on the members of your club?</p> <p>What are their stories or defining moments?</p>

- Remember, you are looking for something that has real newsworthiness – either in the way your club was founded or the impact it has on your members, the youth and community it serves.
- News is something that has the WOW factor! Is the story you're telling unique, a "first", innovative, rare, inspiring, impactful, or about a ground breaking event?

Respect Deadlines

Be aware most all media organizations work to editorial deadlines. So, if you want to maximize the coverage of your story you will need to make sure the launch of your campaign accommodates their deadlines.

As you develop your club's media outreach it is important that you understand the difference between a newsworthy story and a feature story. News stories are time-sensitive and of immediate interest, whereas a feature story can be published at any point in time. Each has different deadlines you will have to factor into your campaign strategy. Listed below are some basic timelines for pitching your stories to the media:

- **Magazines** – 3-6 months in advance
- **Newspapers** – between 1 day and 1-3 weeks
- **Social Media** – 1-2 months
- **Podcasts** – 2-6 weeks
- **Radio** – 1-2 days

These deadlines are extremely important and if you want to use media coverage as part of your public relations/ marketing campaign make sure your stories are available when they are required. Make sure everyone involved in developing your story understands the importance of these deadlines.

Seek Visual Appeal

A successful public relations/marketing campaign needs a story with impact. Your story may sound great on paper, but the use of photographs and videos will give it a whole new dimension and increase its effectiveness in the marketplace.

Anticipate the type of images or videos you would like to use to augment your story so that when the time comes you will have them available and ready to go.

A Knowledgeable and Prepared Spokesperson

As you develop your story and begin to promote it make sure the person who will represent your club or district as your spokesperson is fully prepared to discuss it in detail and is available when necessary.

Nothing can derail a public relations/marketing campaign faster than a spokesperson that is unprepared or is not on time.

Have Media Briefings

Make sure you know exactly what you want to say and that your spokesperson understands your message and is well prepared. You have invested a great deal of time and energy into planning, crafting, and articulating your campaign message. The last thing you want is someone going off script and causing you to miss the opportunity you have worked so hard to create.

Be aware you will only have your audience's attention for a short amount of time before they move on to the next story. This limits the time you have to deliver your message during an interview, so you will have to be on your game and nail it.

Make sure everyone involved in your campaign is well versed in your message – Why you chose it and what you want it to achieve.

Partnerships with Community Influencers

Your public relations/marketing campaign can benefit greatly from what is referred to as “Influencer Marketing”. This type of marketing is achieved by developing partnerships with individuals or organizations with influence in your community. Simply put, influencers normally have a following, who want to know about the individual’s life experiences or the organization’s successes and accomplishments.

Having an individual or organization with influence supporting your club can sometimes be the difference between success and failure. It could be a celebrity, politician, successful businessperson, or highly respected business or organization that has clout in your community. Developing a partnership with such individuals or organizations, ones that truly understand and embrace your mission, will help put your club or event in the spotlight because of their ability to draw people to them.

However, one word of caution. Be sure your partnership is sincere. Make sure your club’s and Optimist International’s values and the influencer’s values are a good fit before you go forward. Audiences have the uncanny ability to tell if the influencer’s support is real or not, and this can sometimes result in negative repercussions.

Integrating Social Media Into Your Campaign

Making use of the available social media platforms should be an integral part of your public relations campaign. The effective use of these communication channels can result in big benefits. Of course, your number one priority is to focus on earning local media coverage, but being able to generate a following on social media channels comes in a close second. Outlined below are five ways you can use social media to assist you in extending the outreach of your public relations/marketing campaign:

- Build anticipation for the launch of your campaign
- Use live broadcasting from your campaign events
- Share your campaign content
- Share your media coverage
- Use social media advertising to boost attention

Build Anticipation for Your Campaign Launch

Before you launch your campaign use social media channels to build anticipation by offering a preview of its content and coming events. This will help you create an

audience that is waiting for more information about your campaign or event and will assist you in expanding your outreach.

Use Live Broadcasting From Your Campaign Events

The use of live broadcasting offered by social media platforms can deliver big benefits to your public relations/marketing efforts. They are a proven way to increase your club's outreach and capture your target audience's attention.

Take the opportunity to film the launch of your event, interview participants, or get spokespeople to talk on camera like they would on television. This content will also be very useful when it comes time to write a press release for your event.

Share Your Campaign Content

Although the content of your public relations/marketing campaign may have been developed primarily for the mainstream media, it can certainly be used for other media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. Maximize the outreach of your campaign content by sharing it across the various social media channels.

Share Your Media Coverage

If you are fortunate enough to get a story featured in the mainstream media, you should immediately share it on social media. This will help extend the outreach of your club's campaign and build the public's confidence in it because it has already been endorsed by the media.

Use Social Media Advertising

If your campaign is generating good media coverage and you are receiving positive responses, maximize its impact by advertising on the various social media platforms. This strategy will help you expand your audience and allow you to be more targeted in the advertising you buy.

Measuring the Success of Your Campaign

The final step, prior to launching your public relations/marketing campaign, is to put measures in place to track and evaluate your results. Such measures should include the following:

- Attendance numbers at your club's event

- Additional media inquiries
- Increase in volunteers and club membership
- Changes in “social sentiment – the feeling or attitude people express on social media regarding your club, the event it held, and the Optimist brand
- The demand for more services

It is recommended you review your campaign as it progresses, instead of leaving everything to the end. After each stage of your campaign is completed sit down and a hard look at the results: Are you on track to achieve the goals and objectives you set? Do you need to modify your original plan? If so, how will you do it and why? Set a review period for every few days, week, etc., and be sure you respond as quickly as possible.

Quantitative Data

Because of the nature of the Optimist International organization and its club structure it can sometimes be a challenge to quantify the impact of a public relations/marketing campaign.

You must understand public relations is not in the business of the hard sell. It is more about persuading and encouraging people to take action. Therefore, the results of a campaign can often be difficult to measure.

Here are a few questions you might ask:

- What were the numbers generated by your call to action?
- Has there been an increase in traffic to your website or Facebook page?
- Did you see an increase in followers on social media?
- Has your club’s membership increased?

Qualitative Data

When it comes to brand positioning and managing a brand’s reputation qualitative data is just as important as quantitative. As you evaluate your results be comprehensive. Look at the different ways your public relations campaign has increased your visibility in the community and the value it has added to your club and the Optimist International brand. The help you accomplish your review answer these questions:

- Has there been any noticeable change in how your club and the Optimist International brand are viewed in your community?
- How were your messages received and what responses did you get?
- Were your messages believed?
- Were there any negative responses?

When you are tracking the results of your public relations/marketing campaign, be sure to measure how it's assimilating into your overall marketing plan. Public relations allows you to reach your target audience(s) without the expense of advertising, but it should not be the only tool used in your marketing efforts. By creating a comprehensive plan and integrating it with your overall marketing strategies, you will be able to position your club in the best possible position to grow and thrive.

The Public Relations/Marketing Kit

Optimist International has a dedicated Public Relations and Marketing page at www.optimist.org to provide you with a kit of materials to assist you in developing and launching a variety of informational campaigns. This kit offers you campaign guides, campaign-specific marketing materials including ad templates, radio and television spots, step-by-step instruction sheets and pamphlets, sample press releases, letters, speeches, and a whole lot more.

Everything in the kit has been designed to facilitate a club's ease of use by providing fill-in-the-blank press releases, editorials, speeches, and event and project planning guides. All of this will be available to clubs and districts electronically and downloadable.

Using Electronic Media

Public Service Announcements for Radio

Optimist International has developed a series of public service announcements for club and district use. They have been prepared in two formats – written, editable templates and produced radio spots. The written PSAs allow a club or district to fill in blanks with a club or district-specific information as well as edit the narrative if they so choose. Once completed it should be placed on club or district letterhead and marketed to your local radio station. These spots are usually read by the station's on-air personalities during the time slots the station has allocated for public service announcements. In some cases, depending on the specific station, your copy may be turned over to the station's

production department to add sound effects, music, or multiple voices. This produced version would become the broadcast version the station would use.

These pre-packaged PSA spots can be downloaded from the Optimist International website. They include:

- Membership Recruiting
- Bringing Out the Best in Kids
- Youth Appreciation Week
- Optimist Junior Golf Program
- Essay Contest
- Oratorical Contest

Be aware public service announcement spots featuring membership recruiting may not be accepted because Optimist International charges dues for membership. Many stations consider such spots as advertising and require payment for broadcasting them. However, in other situations, a station will air the membership PSAs due to Optimist International's not-for-profit 501(c)4 status as a youth-oriented service organization.

Public Service Announcements for Television

Due to the upfront production expense, television public service announcements are many times overlooked as an effective tool in your public relations and marketing kit. However, when spread over several clubs they can be a very cost-effective and powerful way to communicate your message.

It is typically recommended you have a 15-second, 30-second, and 60-second mix of spots.

At present Optimist International does not offer PSAs for television or cable systems.

Videos

Optimist International has produced numerous training programs and promotional videos. These videos are available for use by clubs and districts and can be downloaded from the Optimist International website. The videos are free to be used within the Optimist Family and to show publicly at Optimist events. Since this material is

copyrighted by Optimist International if you plan to use them for programs other than PSAs, please contact the Marketing Department at Optimist International

There is a list of available videos in the annex section of this handbook.

Section 5: Making Your Pitch to the Media

In developing a strong media presence, it will be necessary for you to cultivate a relationship with the appropriate media contact person to pitch your club's story or event.

The easiest and most effective way to do this is to pick up the telephone and call the newspaper, radio, television station, or cable network and ask the person who answers whom you should send your press release or speak with about your story or event. Explain to the person who you are and the information you need. Get the name, telephone number, fax number, and email information of the person you should contact. With this information in hand, you can begin the communication and relationship-building process. Understand every media operation is different. This is the reason you want to take the time to find the right contact to work with. The key individuals involved in writing or producing the kind of stories you would like published, broadcast, or posted. Below is a listing and brief description of the major players in the various media operations:

The Daily Newspaper

- **City Editor** – Unless you have a relationship with someone higher. This individual is the highest you will want to go in the decision-making chain. The City Editor is generally the person who makes reporter assignments for stories. In addition, he or she edits the stories and decides what will be printed and what will be discarded.
- **Reporter** – Even though most reporters are assigned the stories they write they also have the additional responsibility of suggesting stories for publication. By developing a strong relationship with these individuals, you can convince them about the importance of your story or event and at the same time receive suggestions from them on how to make your stories or events more appealing.
- **Editorial Page Editor** – The individuals in this position work separately from the news writing side of the newspaper. They are responsible for overseeing and developing the editorial positions of the publication. If you have an editorial written by your club president, district governor, or the

- Optimist International President and would like to get it in the newspaper this is the person you would contact.
- **Op-Ed Editor** – This individual is the person who selects the commentary and opinion articles for the newspaper that normally appear on the page opposite the editorial in most papers. The Op-Ed page allows you the opportunity to frame a story in your own words. Use this page to raise awareness about the Optimist mission and the good work Optimists are doing in your community and throughout the world.
- **Letters to the Editor** – Most newspapers have one individual, usually from the editorial department, assigned to handle letters to the editor. They review them and then select the ones to be published. Usually, there are specific requirements and information on how to submit a letter to the editor. This is an excellent way to reinforce the positive impact and perception of Optimist International and your club.

The Weekly Newspapers

- **Editor** – A weekly newspaper operates on a completely different scale from a daily newspaper. They are usually much smaller operations and have just a few staff members. Staff members must be multi-talented, and able to handle several jobs. These papers are normally community-focused and are more likely to publish your story or cover your events. They are an excellent way to reach out to the community you serve.

The Television Station

- **Assignment Editor** – This is an important person to cultivate. He or she is the person who is responsible for assigning reporters and videographers to cover stories and events.
- **Reporter** – Television reporters are on the front lines. They do the interviews, meet the people, and craft the story for the viewers. Having a good rapport with a local reporter is worth its weight in gold. It will allow you to pitch your story or

event to them and receive feedback on how you might make it more newsworthy. It is normal that once you are handed off from the assignment editor to a reporter, you can communicate directly with the reporter.

- **Community Affairs Director** – When a television station does activities out in a community, this is the individual who coordinates and directs everything. This would be the go-to person if your club wants to establish a partnership with the station for some type of event or special activity within the community you serve.
- **Public Affairs Director** – If your club has an event or program you want to promote in your community the public affairs director would be your contact. This individual is responsible for the production and hosting of station programs involving issues of direct interest to the public.

The Radio Station

- **News and Public Service Director** – Having this person on your media contact list is vital. These individuals are usually responsible for hosting or producing programs featuring activities and events of community interest.
- **Promotions Director** – The individuals in this position are responsible for coordinating the appearances of on-the-air personalities at events and
- developing projects and programs to help increase listener participation and awareness.
- **Continuity Director** – This is the individual at most radio stations in charge of scheduling the time slots for all the commercials. In certain situations, they may also be responsible for scheduling public service announcements.

Just remember, in dealing with the media you want to develop strong relationships and have access to those key decision-makers responsible for the content, scheduling, and programming. It's the key to pitching your stories and events and having them published, broadcasted, or posted. Make sure you are in contact with them regularly to help with the stories and activities they are working on. When they do good work in the community and demonstrate actions comparable to our Optimist mission and our Creed

recognizes them by an award or proclamation. Become their go-to person when it comes to community service and volunteerism. By keeping yourself within their sphere of influence when they see stories or issues from or about Optimism, they will know whom to contact.

However, a word to the wise. Temper your expectations concerning what will merit media coverage. What you might consider newsworthy may not be in the eyes of the media. To enhance your chances of getting news coverage, make sure you plan your events or activities with a news angle. For instance, the honoring of a local celebrity or prominent citizen. Evaluate each of your events or activities to see if there is a local story that goes beyond these undertakings. Using the relationships you've cultivated with the local media, pitch your idea to your contacts. Remember, your relationships are a two-way street. You want your stories and events publicized and the media wants great stories to tell and cover activities and events that interest their readers, viewers, and listeners. Maximize your media relationships by learning what kind of stories and events these various organizations are most interested in and assisting them whenever you can in making contacts and gathering information.

Criteria for Achieving Media Relations Success

There are numerous ways for Optimist International and your club to generate positive media coverage. Try having a brainstorming session within your club, zone, or district to generate ideas for newsworthy stories and events. Then, compare your findings against the following criteria:

Timeliness

- What new club events are happening?
- Is your club about to announce a special fundraiser or service project?
- Is there a possibility of tying your announcement/event to a holiday, or observance?
- Is your club or Optimist International celebrating an anniversary or noteworthy milestone?

Proximity

- Is your club's event or announcement taking place in the media's coverage area?

- Is this event or activity you're going to conduct unique to your club and the community it serves?

Impact

- Will your event affect a lot of people?
- Who will participate? Club members? Volunteers? Eventgoers? Children? General public?

Importance

- Will this project or event be important to the community? Why?
- If donations are involved who will receive the money?

Uniqueness

- Is your event/announcement different or unusual?
- Is there the opportunity to bring in a media personality to assist with your event? (as an Emcee, Spokesperson, or speaker)
- Is there an opportunity to connect your event with a local celebrity or elected official?

The Media Contact Sheet

As you contact the various media outlets in your community it would be wise to develop a media contact list. This will allow you to keep everything organized and readily available. To assist you with this task, we have included in this section a template for a simple contact sheet for your use. If you wish to create your own or modify this one, please do so.

However, if you decide to organize or record your media contacts make sure you have this information backed up and continuously updated. This will not only be helpful to you, but also to the individual who will be responsible for your club's public relations and marketing in the future.

Understanding the development of media contacts will take time and patience, but if done correctly, the rewards will be substantial in the long term. Keeping a media contact sheet will provide continuity to your club's public relations and marketing efforts as well as assist you in having a better understanding of what kind of stories

and events the media is looking for. Building relationships with the local media is essential in helping Optimist International and your club strengthen the Optimist brand and image in your community.

Media Contact List



Company:	Media Type:
Circulation/Audience:	
Remarks:	
Deadline Information:	
Special Requirements:	

Contacts

Contact 1		
Name:		Title:
Address:		Business Phone:
		Home Phone:
		Cell Phone:
		Pager:
		E-mail:
		Fax:
Remarks:		

Contact 2		
Name:		Title:
Address:		Business Phone:
		Home Phone:
		Cell Phone:
		Pager:
		E-mail:
		Fax:
Remarks:		

Contact 3		
Name:		Title:
Address:		Business Phone:
		Home Phone:
		Cell Phone:
		Pager:
		E-mail:
		Fax:
Remarks:		

Section 6: What is News?

So, what makes news? How can you ever figure out what the media will cover? Do they ever write about anything that is not bad news?

These are some of the most frustrating questions you can face when trying to publicize Optimist activities. You may think your program has all the makings of a 10 p.m. news feature, but when the day arrives, every television camera in town is on the other side of the highway covering the latest jackknifed tractor-trailer rig.

According to the dictionary, “news” is a report of a current event, a report of recent events, or new information. To appeal to a news organization, this information should be significant and of interest to many people or appeal to people’s compassion or emotions.

Unfortunately, there is no surefire recipe for success. And, even when the media commit to covering an event if a five-alarm fire breaks out or a celebrity decides to come into town, your event probably won’t make the cut. But what you can do is develop a creative, compelling event and present it to the media in such a way it will pique their interest.

The Eight Elements of News

One of the many things that anyone responsible for a club’s marketing or public relations efforts and creating story content must cope with is how to get their audience(s) to sit up, listen, and take notice. Many experts have trouble defining what is newsworthy. However, most journalists have come to a consensus that eight basic elements determine what is considered news.

- The first element is **immediacy**. It deals with something that has just happened or is soon to happen. Time is a key ingredient. Did it or is it about to happen today, early this morning, this evening, or tomorrow, etc.? The uniqueness of the situation or occurrence brings immediacy to reporting it in the news.
- The second element is **proximity**. Does the information, or occurrences affect your audience(s) personally? The news organizations are consistently asking the question: “If this happened outside our immediate area, our city, our state, would someone be interested in reading it?” This question is particularly important to an organization's public relations strategy. In such an instance, one must take off the

I love my organization hat and look at the story from the perspective of whether it would interest other readers.

- The third element of newsworthiness is **prominence**. This type of story is usually about something or someone people consider to be of great significance or importance such as business icons, public figures, and other people of renown. To qualify for news prominence your visitor, speaker, or presenter must be well known and command a reader's attention, either by reputation, or the topic being discussed.
- A fourth element of the news is **oddity**. People are attracted to things that are a little strange, out of the ordinary, and unusual. For example, people performing extraordinary feats in emergencies, doing things, or using materials in unusual ways.
- **Conflict** is the fifth element making up what is considered news. Is there an element of struggle in the story you want to tell? Most organizations want to avoid reporting conflict, if possible, but this element is one of the cornerstones of the news formula.
- The sixth element, **suspense**, expands news appeal. It gives people a reason to keep reading. However, an organization like Optimist International would rarely experience this kind of circumstance. Keep in mind that news suspense and mystery suspense are not the same things. Although mystery expense in the news does occur when a crime is committed.
- **Emotion** is the seventh element of news. Anything involving human interest stories that speak to people's experiences and conveys real feelings will help readers connect with your message. This element brings humanity to your story. It deals with the emotions that stir our recognition of both our psychological and physical needs. Stories involving emotions lead the reader toward sympathy, anger, and other various forms of emotion. These stories are normally handled as feature-type articles. An organization such as Optimist International which is committed to service should look for and promote human interest stories. They

don't have to be tear-jerkers or keep your audience in stitches of laughter. They bring humanity into your communications.

- The last element of news is **consequences**. For a story to have consequences it must appeal to many readers and have an impact on their lives. News stories with a consequence usually impact a reader in some personal way and affect their present and future.

It is important to keep these guidelines in mind when you are considering if your message or story is newsworthy or an announcement. Is it a feature that will be appealing or inspiring to the public or is it an item of limited interest? Once you have determined this you can decide which format to use for distributing your story and the medium most likely to publish or broadcast it.

A Checklist for Presenting an Optimist Story

Listed below is a checklist and tips on determining what makes an Optimist story and how to present it to the media in the best light:

- **Is your event news?** Unique? For instance, is your club the first-ever to start a new club made up of members with special needs, or sponsoring a program that offers mentors from the business community to young adults with disabilities?
- **Is it a community-wide event?** Does it draw many participants or spectators?
- **If it's a long-standing event, is there an anniversary coming up you can publicize?** For example, in honor of the Optimist Club's 25th Annual Golf Tournament, a 25-foot-high birthday cake in the shape of a golf club will be unveiled and 25 underprivileged youth will be sent to a local golf clinic for the summer.
- **Is your club inviting a well-known expert, politician, or celebrity to act as master of ceremonies or honorary chair for your next event?** If your club has invited the mayor to be the special guest at your Oratorical contest and he or she accepts, don't keep it to yourself. Local celebrities – sports heroes, coaches, philanthropists, CEOs – will also draw media attention to your club's event.

- **Is the Optimist International President in town to speak to your district?** Take advantage of the President's notoriety by informing the media of his or her presence.
- **Has your club planned anything crazy or off-the-wall?** The media is driven by visuals. Most stations run a 15-second fun story – or “kicker” – at the end of each newscast. For example, consider a mile-long bicycle session across town to launch a safety on wheels event.
- **Is the event inherently visual?** Do you have Optimists teaming up with inner-city youth to rebuild flood-ravaged homes? Make sure the media know they are welcome to photograph the project.
- **Is your event particularly timely or relevant?** In response to a catastrophic hurricane, a local Optimist Club distributed copies of a children's book to families to help them deal with the emotional impact of the disaster.
- **Have you teamed up with a worthwhile charity?** After hearing that recent fire fatalities were attributed to the lack of smoke detectors, a local Optimist Club teamed up with the local chapter of the International Association of Fire Chiefs to canvass neighborhoods for houses without smoke detectors. Another club teamed up with the local children's hospital and turned its long-standing annual golf tournament into a newsworthy charity event to support the hospital.

Two Key Points of Media Coverage

- You must give the media a reason to cover your event.
And that reason can't be because the Optimists are a great organization, care about our youth, and have done a lot for the community.
- To better ensure media coverage, learn to think like a reporter.
What would make a reporter go to his/her editor and say, “Hey, did you hear about this? The Optimists are marching through town tomorrow collecting guns

door-to-door for their gun buy-back program.” Or, “I just heard the Optimists’ Safety on Wheels Program in the park is going to have a 75-foot-long sandwich in the shape of a bicycle tire.”

Tip:

The best time to raise these key points is during the planning process of an event. It is much easier to create both a compelling event and to attract media attention if these points are considered early on. You don’t want to be scrambling around for a way to make a ho-hum event exciting the night before it happens.

Even the best-laid plans can go south on you if a few details are overlooked. Make sure doing your planning for your event you consider the following:

- Be aware of what else is going on in the area and community you serve. Don’t schedule your Oratorical Contest on the same day as the Thanksgiving Day Parade.
- Choose a central location and a sensible time. Unless you’ve invited some big celebrity as your guest speaker or master of ceremony, few media reporters will fight rush hour traffic to come to a club meeting or an event. The bottom line is, don’t give the media an excuse not to cover your club’s event by asking them to travel too far from their stations or by scheduling it at a time that makes it impossible for them to attend.
- Beware of being part of a trend. For instance, if three other service clubs already have received publicity distributing food baskets for the needy, the media will likely be looking for some other feel-good, newsworthy event.
- Last and certainly not least make sure you follow up with the media you submitted your news releases to. Don’t assume they’ll hang on to that news release you sent them two weeks ago and show up unannounced at your event. Send information early and then on the day before the event and follow up the morning of the activity with a phone call. You don’t want to become a pest, but you also don’t want them to overlook you.

What Is the Purpose of a Press Release?

For your club, this could be the announcement of a planned event or fundraiser, an award given or received, club anniversaries, or new club officers, to name a few.

Anything you want the public to know about your club can be submitted in a press release. Positive visibility will attract membership and community support.

Effective press releases can be a great way to spread the word about what's happening at your club. They can help you:

- **Reach new audiences.** Press releases offer an opportunity to reach a large audience. Many clubs already use social media or email for most of their big announcements. This is a great way to keep those familiar with your club updated. However, press releases have the potential to reach out to a broader scope of people for the first time and connect with new members or supporters.
- **Build relationships.** Press releases help clubs establish name recognition with journalists and the public by increasing their media coverage. A good relationship with local journalists can lead to better coverage of club events or programs.
- **Improve search engine optimization.** Press releases can help boost the ranking on search engines since they can generate new articles around the Internet with keywords and links to the club or Optimist International's official website (called "backlinks").

The standard press release template will include the following parts:

- **Headline:** Every press release features a headline, which should be attention-grabbing and mention the club's name.
- **Release Date:** Once you are ready to send out your press release, write "FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE" or "FOR RELEASE ON [date] AT [time]" at the top of the page, under the logo. Make sure the words are all capital letters and that the text is bold.
- **Location and date:** The location and the date are on every press release. The city where the club is located is typically formatted in all caps, followed by the month, day, and year in title case (e.g., "YOUR CITY, December 2, 2022").
- **Lead/Subhead:** The lead, sometimes spelled lede, is the first line of the press release, and it should include all the essential information. The lead can either be the first sentence of the body or a subhead underneath the headline.
- **Body copy:** Your body paragraphs make up the rest of your news story, where you can include supplemental information, quotes, and bullet points.
- **Multimedia:** A press release usually contains high-quality photos or videos to supplement the written content.

- **Boilerplate:** The boilerplate offers a short description of the organization. This should be the club's name with a website link, a sentence about the club, and a sentence about Optimist International with a website link and the mission statement.
- **Contact information:** Include the name of the contact person about this press release, social media links, phone numbers, or email addresses.
- Write "END" or "###" at the bottom of the page. If the press release is more than one page, write "-More-" at the bottom of the first page.

Types of Press Releases

There are several types of press releases, categorized by what type of announcement is being shared:

1. **Award:** Sharing an award, prize, or recognition that the organization has given or received
2. **Pre-event notice:** Announcing upcoming club events
3. **Club-event notice:** Sharing the results of club events
4. **New club officers:** Announcing new club officers in key leadership positions
5. **Fundraising:** Announcing a club fundraiser

Press Release Do's and Don'ts

Your press release should:

- Use single-spaced Times New Roman font
- Have a clear release date
- Have a concise headline that will attract attention
- Answer the who, what, when, where, and why questions quickly
- If there is a call to action by the reader, make it obvious
- Have 2 to 4 sentences per paragraph with varying length and structure
- Be written in third person
- Use good grammar and spelling
- Use natural language
- Be as upbeat as possible
- Be easy to read – get a friend or club member to read your press release and tell you the key points. This will tell you if you covered the topic completely.

Your press release should not:

- Ramble

- Use jargon or acronyms which are not explained
- Use foul language
- Include excessive quotes

Achieving Press Release Success

A press release is often the preferred method for media outlets to receive news. However, sending out a press release does not guarantee success. Consider the following tips when developing your release and sending it to the local media:

- **Consider Your Audience.** When developing your release with news from your Optimist club, ask the question, “Why should the reader or viewer care?” The media will be interested in your release more if they feel it will have an impact on their audience. When you ask yourself this question and include the answer in your release, you increase your chances of generating the media’s interest and it is used in their publication or program.
- **Get the Word Out.** When you distribute your press release send it to each media contact through their preferred delivery method. Let them know you have a spokesperson available if they would like to set up an interview. Make sure the person you’ve chosen as the club’s representative is articulate, well prepared, and aware of the potential questions that might be asked during a face-to-face interview or telephone call.
- **Follow Up.** Be persistent in your efforts. A day or two after submitting your press release, contact each of your media contacts to inquire about their interest in your release and to see if they may have questions or would like an interview. Be aware reporters receive a tremendous amount of information daily and sometimes things get overlooked. A quick reminder is usually appreciated and will help bring attention to your story.

Helpful Hint: Keep a list of local media outlets which includes contact information and reporting deadlines close at hand to assist you in making sure your press release is delivered promptly and to the appropriate person.

The Key Elements of a Press Release



Press Release

Date: Day/Month/Year

Your Headline Goes Here, and It Needs to be Newsworthy

THIS is your vital first paragraph, include five key news points and try to keep it to no more than 25 words.

Expand on the first paragraph with a little more detail about your story, remember each sentence should be a **standalone paragraph**.

In this paragraph continue to elaborate on the main news angle, include here a little more factual information, how long your club has been in the community and the Optimist mission.

Now your main spokesperson is introduced and explains what they are about to say. Give their full name with the office they hold in your club, i.e. Pam Barckholtz, President of the Bay City Optimist Club, said:

She said: "Quote here that explains the "WHY" behind the story and has passion and life.

"As the quote continues it needs to keep talking about motivation and purpose and also highlight the impact you hope to have with your business.

"Finish your quote looking to the future and giving people an idea of what is happening next with your company and how they can get **involved**."

Bring in more facts here about your story - figures and details about what makes your business so special. This is information that you need but it is not very newsworthy.

You can introduce another spokesperson or the first spokesperson again. If you use someone else, try and get a third-party organization with credibility **who can endorse** your product/service/event.

He said: "Quote here, quote here, quote here. Quote here, quote here, quote here. Quote here, quote here, quote here. Quote here, quote here, quote here.

Say what it is. This is a **PRESS RELEASE**

Always date the release with the day you issued it, unless it is issued to the media before its official publication date. If you issue your release again at a later time, remember to change the date. No wants a story that's yesterday's news.

This heading should be a fact that immediately catches the reporter's or editor's attention. It can be repeated in your introduction paragraph but elaborated upon. Always try to stick to one line as this discipline will force you to be concise.

Capitalize the first word as this is good news style and shows a reporter/editor you know what you are doing. The introduction paragraph should clearly present your news hook. Remember you are looking to include something that is newsworthy, a first, unusual, unique, disruptive, or counter intuitive about your story. This is what makes news.

This short paragraph style forces you to write very logically, avoid repetition, and it makes it easy for a reporter to edit their piece to any length depending on how much they want to use - This is how they write.

Make sure your quotes sound like a human speaking and not a robot writing. Try a few quotes out loud to yourself before you type it up. What do you really want to say? News stories should always be written in the perfect tense. Features are in the present tense.


If you are including an image with your press release, make sure the person you are quoting are in the photograph. Never embed your photographs in your press release.

Only close the quotation marks at the end of the final paragraph.

Great method to build trust in your club and the Optimist brand. It leaves the reporter thinking, "Okay this must be good, other people are saying it's great, not just the person issuing the release.

Examples of press releases:

1. General Press Release

Contact Information: [Club Name] [Contact Name] [Phone Number] [Email Address] Release Date: [Date]	
<p style="text-align: center;">[PRESS RELEASE HEADLINE IN ALL CAPS]</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>[Optional Subheadline Sentence]</i></p>	
<p>[City, State, Month Date] – [Lede Paragraph: Summarize the most important information, answering the questions of who, what, where, when, and why.]</p>	
<p>[Body: 2 – 4 paragraphs including quotes.]</p>	
<p>[Boilerplate: club and OI information including social media and website links]</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">[Call to Action] Learn more about {Your Club Name} at {website}</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">###</p>	

2. Event Press Release

Contact Information: [Club Name] [Contact Name] [Phone Number] [Email Address] Release Date: [Date]	
<p style="text-align: center;">FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE [{Your Club Name} Presents {Event Name/Description}]</p> <p>[City, State] – [Lede Paragraph: {Your Club Name/Person} will present {Event Name} at {Location} on {Date}].</p> <p>[Why and Details] {Your Club Name} proudly presents {Event Name} and state purpose.</p> <p>[Details: Include pricing and where to get tickets]</p> <p>[Additional Details: Include quotes from attendees, guests, etc.]</p> <p>[Boilerplate: club and OI information including social media and website links]</p> <p style="text-align: center;">[Call to Action] Learn more and get tickets at {Website}</p> <p style="text-align: center;">###</p>	

3. Award Press Release

Contact Information: [Club Name] [Contact Name] [Phone Number] [Email Address] Release Date: [Date]	
<p style="text-align: center;">FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE [{Your Club Name} Named {Award/Description}]</p> <p>[City, State] – [Lede Paragraph: {Your Club Name/Person} received the honor of {Award} at {Location} on {Date}].</p> <p>[Details: Include the award's history and a summary of how it was presented]</p> <p>[Additional Details: Include quotes from presenter, committee, judges, etc.]</p> <p>[Boilerplate: club and OI information including social media and website links]</p> <p style="text-align: center;">###</p>	

4. Officer Press Release

Contact Information: [Club Name] [Contact Name] [Phone Number] [Email Address] Release Date: [Date]	
<p style="text-align: center;">FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE [{Name}] Elected {Officer} of {Your Club Name}]</p> <p>[City, State] – [Lede Paragraph: {Name/Person} has been elected {Officer} of {Your Club Name} on {Date}. The term of office will begin on {Date}]</p> <p>[Quote from new officer]</p> <p>[Brief biography of new officer]</p> <p>[Boilerplate: club and OI information including social media and website links]</p> <p style="text-align: center;">###</p>	

Section 7: Building Relationships

The concept of public relations is broad-based, involving building relationships, and interacting with the community. Media relations are only one piece of the pie. One will not work without the other.

Strengthening your club's relationships with representatives from throughout the community will help enhance your club's local reputation and its impact. It is a fact when an organization works within a local structure and is perceived as performing valuable community service, publicity and good media contacts are much easier to develop and cultivate.

Media Relationships

If you are not already familiar with the reporters in your area who cover community issues, children, and families, education, etc., your priority is to conduct a media audit.

- **Determine Target Media Organizations.** Ascertain the local newspapers, Web sites, newsletters, publications, radio stations, and television stations that are reaching your potential members and supporters. Develop a list of these and record their address, phone number, Web site, and email addresses.
- **Find the Right Reporter or Contact Person.** Contact each media outlet you listed to find out which reporters and/or editors cover the areas of interest your club's activities and programs may fall under. Don't forget to include columnists who report on community news and the editors of community calendars and special sections of the newspaper or television broadcasts spotlighting the community and/or people.
- **Building a Relationship.** After determining the appropriate individuals you need to contact with your news story or idea, make contact with them. Introduce yourself and give them a brief background on why you are calling. Ask them the following questions:
 - What topic(s) do they regularly cover?

- What would be the best way to keep in touch with them and convey the information you have – by telephone, email, mail, fax, etc.?
- What stories, areas of interest, or trends are they working on at the moment?
- What activities or information could you provide them about your club that would be of interest to them and their readers or viewers?

Don't be discouraged if your first contact does not result in the reporter covering your club's activities. Consider it the first step in developing a mutually beneficial relationship between you and the reporter. In addition, it will help you understand the type of event, activity, or story that will entice them and be of interest to their readers or viewers.

Community Relationships

In addition to building relationships with the media, it is also important to establish relationships with other key segments of your community. Listed below are some steps you can take to strengthen existing relationships as well as develop new ones:

- Since building relationships is so important in increasing our brand awareness your club may want to set aside a meeting to discuss strengthening member contacts.
- The first step in relationship building is to look at your club's roster. Do you have members from business, the professions, education, community organizations, government, labor, media, etc.? If not, you may want to keep this in mind when recruiting new members for your club.
- After reviewing your existing club members, survey and inventory their contacts. What kind of relationships do they have with local businesses, the professions, educational institutions, community organizations, government, labor, media, etc.? These relationships may help you get your foot in the door.

- Encourage your members to reach out to their contacts and initiate a dialogue with them about your club, its objectives, and its role in the

community. Inform them about upcoming Club projects and programs and the results of your club's past work and initiatives. Don't put the hard sell on them about becoming a member, but rather show them the positive impact your club has on the community and the opportunities that lie ahead.

- Encourage some of your members to become involved with worthwhile community organizations by serving on their board of directors or as a volunteer to put your club in the limelight with local movers and shakers. This can be a steppingstone to connecting with new segments in the community, opening new opportunities for membership and increasing Optimist International's and your club's brand awareness throughout the community.
- Consider having a community leader speak at an upcoming club event. This will many times draw the media and gives your club the chance to showcase its purposes, programs, and activities within the community it serves to a wider more influential audience.
- As your club begins to build its community relationships, your members may find themselves being asked to become involved more visually, with service-oriented projects and programs or business-oriented sponsorships that not only impact the community but attract the media.
- Remember – the opportunity to build meaningful and effective relationships is all around us. Always be on the lookout for opportunities to spread the word about Optimist International's mission and your club and be prepared to take advantage of the payoff. The expansion of the Optimist brand.

Section 8: Advertising

There is a question frequently asked when we discuss advertising at Optimist International: Why doesn't Optimist International conduct a national campaign to promote and advertise for clubs and members?

The simple fact is MONEY! Optimist International is a not-for-profit, member-based youth service organization and the dues from its membership are directed toward our administrative staff that supports our membership, clubs, and districts; the liability insurance coverage for each member, and other benefits such as our website and Learning Management System. An advertising campaign needed to saturate the various networks would cost millions of dollars.

As a grassroots organization, our clubs are the heart and soul of Optimist International. Each club is a unique, autonomous entity with its own personality, programs, and activities putting it in a position to better assess and understand its promotional and advertising needs at the local level. The key objective of advertising is to obtain media coverage as a public service and use paid advertising as necessary. Every club should set aside funds within its yearly budget for advertising and marketing.

Optimist International's marketing committee stands ready to assist clubs with recommendations, suggestions, and pre-produced media products that can be used both as a public service campaign, as well as in local advertising and promotional efforts. The committee welcomes any ideas or suggestions on the development and use of new and unique promotional tools for use by our clubs to promote Optimism.

Public Service Announcements

As a not-for-profit service organization Optimist International's clubs conduct community-service projects that can be publicized for free with public service announcements in both print and electronic media. Offered voluntarily on a case-by-case basis and as space and time allow, most newspapers, radio, and television stations allocate a certain amount of donated space or airtime for the benefit of their audiences. This can be a boon to a club that cultivates a relationship with the media.

Community Relationships

Your club needs to establish itself as a respected member of the community. You will find it much easier to facilitate and develop relationships with the local media when your club is well known in the community. You want to be on the media's contact list. This will give your club an advantage when attempting to promote a news story or publicize an event.

Increasing Awareness

Having the ability to buy advertising gives you an advantage when mounting a promotional campaign. First, it allows you the opportunity to run your ad whenever you choose and for time you want; and second, it puts you in complete control. For example, a club could augment its membership recruitment efforts by advertising in the newspaper, on the radio, or television. Your club may also use the media to promote your club's scholarship programs, such as the essay, oratorical, and communications contests for the deaf and hard of hearing contests. The fact is that whatever Optimist International or your local club may want to promote, buying an advertisement in the newspaper, on the radio, or television will allow you to target specific audiences. This can result in big benefits when your club is attempting to increase its awareness in the community you serve.

Expanding Your Outreach

Advertising is a great way to expand and maximize your club's outreach to the community it serves. When buying broadcast time, you can select the specific programs as well as the time of day your message will be published or aired. Use of public service announcements is encouraged because they are done at no cost to you, however, a major drawback is you have no control over when they will run. It could be at any time, late at night, or very early in the morning when most people are sleeping. Buying broadcast time gives you the privilege of selecting the specific program you would like your ad to run on and the time slot it will run in. For example, a radio spot promoting the benefits of joining an Optimist Club would reach its biggest audience during the morning and evening drive times when most people are either going to work or returning home from work. Unfortunately, those time slots are usually the most expensive.

Targeting Your Audience

Developing a creative advertising plan and buying advertising focused on your intended audience will greatly enhance your ability to achieve your promotional goals and objectives. For instance, let's say you want to reach out to the young professionals or educators in your community. Working with the various media groups you would be able to choose programming that appeals to each group during the time they are commuting to and from their workplaces. Each audience you reach out to has different listening and viewing habits. Every media organization has experts and statistics to help you pinpoint and determine the best listening or viewing time slots for each audience you desire to reach.

An Advertising Blitz versus A Targeted Campaign

Unless your club is unusually large or has a financial windfall, a full advertising campaign is most likely not going to be a viable option to promote your club. However, short-term targeted advertising campaigns are not as costly and can be very effective.

An example of an advertising blitz is when a large corporation like Coca-Cola in its efforts to sell a new soft drink launches a media campaign designed to reach the maximum number of consumers to sell the highest number of their new product to generate the maximum number of dollars. It does this by saturating the market with its message. First Coca-Cola's advertising department or agency determines the best time to maximize its outreach to consumers. Then they mount a media blitz advertising in newspapers, on television, on radio, on cable networks, and social media to blanket the market with their message so everyone sees or hears about their new product. This type of advertising campaign is advantageous to a large corporation like Coca-Cola because consumers respond by buying their products in quantities that more than pay for the cost of the advertising.

However, an organization like Optimist International is not selling a product. We are selling a lifestyle with a mission of service to youth and our communities. A large advertising campaign like one Coca-Cola or other large corporations might launch would not generate the same results.

Due to the structure of our organization, a federation of autonomous clubs, our focus should be on tailoring a message specific to our intended audience(s) or demographic in

smaller more economical time slots and selecting one or two media outlets to carry the message. This type of approach allows a club to analyze the effectiveness of the campaign and if it should be continued in the future.

A major factor ineffective advertising is a consistent and repetitive message. The more you can put or keep your message in front of the readers, viewers, and listeners the more prone they are to take the actions you desire.

So, how do you decide which is the best medium in which to advertise? Depending on the type of message you want to promote and the audience you are trying to reach, each medium has its pros and cons.

Television

Above all else, television is a highly visual and action medium. It allows you to strategically define your target audience. Television stations have experts that will assist you in crafting an advertising campaign to meet your club's marketing goals and objectives. For example, if your objective is to recruit young males you would probably concentrate your advertising spots around sporting events and other televised programs that appeal to them. The great thing about television is that it will put your message in front of many viewers. However, the downside of using this medium is the high cost of each advertising spot. Yet this might be the perfect opportunity for clubs near each other to pool their promotional dollars and launch an advertising campaign that will benefit a group of clubs rather than just one club. The game plan should always be to maximize our advertising dollars by pooling our resources and thinking creatively.

Cable Networks

Cable networks offer a lot of the same benefits television stations do. They offer a high degree of selectivity in their programming and they have specialists to help you develop the best plan for your club. These experts will help tailor an advertising schedule that will put your message in front of the widest number of people you desire to reach. In many cases, these networks will also be willing to assemble custom promotional packages developed to suit your club's specific requirements.

Radio

Of all the broadcasting media, radio provides you with the biggest bang for your buck, depending on the audience you want to reach. As a rule, AM stations focus more on news, sports, religion, and talk show formats. FM stations emphasize music and entertainment.

Using radio advertising can be very affordable depending on the audience size and the transmitting strength of the station. Small locally owned stations are more affordable and will allow you to stretch your advertising dollars. If this is the way you choose to go, be sure you weigh the pros and cons regarding your intended audience and message. For example, if your focus is more on activities and programs, a local station would be the ideal choice. However, if you are trying to attract young people as members, you would probably want to select a station that covers a broader area and features current music and sports events.

The key to a successful radio advertising campaign is to become familiar with the radio stations providing programming for your area so you clearly understand what they have that would appeal to your audience. Choose the ones you think are the best fit for your club's advertising goals and meet with their sales staff. Prepare a list of questions about their track record, recommendations, and results expected.

Most radio stations offer a variety of packaged deals, including free spots for every spot purchased and discounts for the length of time an ad is broadcast. Also, they offer a variety of time periods over the course of a day. The cost of a radio spot can vary between \$2 to several hundred dollars, depending on the station's wattage and audiences within its broadcast range.

Drive Time Traffic Reports

In most metropolitan areas radio stations provide drive time traffic reports during rush hour or peak travel times of the day. The stations offer individual traffic reports sponsors can buy every week. The usual practice is to buy 180 reports for two weeks on several different stations. The strategy behind this is it allows you to reach out to virtually all your target audiences during peak drive times. By using the different radio stations, you have a better chance of capturing their undivided attention. Within your advertising strategy, you would choose the format stations that best meet your

demographic criteria. The reports would include some sort of introduction such as, "brought to you by the XYZ Optimist Club, or the Optimist Clubs of XYZ City. This would be followed by a ten-second trailer such as:

Opening: *This report is brought to you by Optimist International and the _____ Optimist Club.*

Message:

Are you a person who wants to make a difference in a child's life, become a force of positive change in your community, and bring out the best in yourself? Become an Optimist. Call the _____ Optimist Club today at XXX.XXX.XXXX

Optimists have been serving children around the world for over a century. Join us and become part of the Optimist movement. Call the _____ Optimist Club today at XXX.XXX.XXXX.

We need Optimism today more than ever! Want to make a positive difference in the life of those around you? Join Optimist International. Call the _____ Optimist Club at XXX.XXX.XXXX and start making a difference today.

Would you like to be a better person, become a force of positive change in your community, and become a child's hero? Become part of the Optimist International movement! Call the _____ Optimist Club today at XXX.XXX.XXXX.

Think only of the best, work only for the best, and expect only the best. Optimists share this commitment with those around them every day! Want to be the best you can be? Become an Optimist. Call XXX.XXX.XXX.

Do you want to be the best you can be? Do you want to live a BIG life full of joy and fulfillment? Contact an Optimist club near you and see how your life can be bigger and better! Call XXX.XXX.XXXX.

Leave an everlasting legacy in your community! Change the world one step, one deed at a time! Join an Optimist Club near you and make a difference in the World! Call XXX.XXX.XXXX.

Create a legacy that will leave a lasting impact on the life of a child and your community! Join an Optimist Club near you and make a difference in the World today! Call XXX.XXX.XXXX.

Make Optimism a way of life! Bring hope and joy to others. Improve the quality of your life by helping others in your community. Contact an Optimist club member nearby and learn how you can Bring out the Best! Call XXX.XXX.XXXX.

As Optimists, we can change the world, one child, one adult, and one community member at a time! Working together, we can help fill the needs of children and others, but only if we take action! Contact an Optimist Club today to join in our efforts to better meet the needs of others in our communities! Call XXX.XXX.XXXX.

Make the World a better place, live your best life, and help others in your community while having fun! Take action now! Contact your local Optimist club today to learn how you can make a difference in your community! Call XXX.XXX.XXXX.

Are you ready to make the world a better place? Are you ready to stretch your life, dream bigger, to reach for a higher goal in life? Are you ready to impact others while you become the best version of yourself? Join in our Optimist International mission of Bringing out the Best in Youth, our communities, and ourselves. Contact your local Optimist Club today to learn more! Call XXX.XXX.XXXX.

Newspaper

Using newspaper advertising can be a mixed bag due to reduced circulation and ad costs. However, the newspaper allows you the opportunity to craft a campaign to reach a specific audience depending on which section of the paper the ad is placed in, the size of the ad or insert, and the cost of the ad.

Daily newspapers are usually the most expensive depending on their service area and size of circulation. Our research shows weekly newspapers are the most cost-effective providing more bang for the buck.

If you decide to make the newspaper part of your advertising campaign, consider the neighborhood sections. Do the research and advertise in the section of the newspaper

that best reaches your audience(s), such as sport, business, neighborhood, and national news to name a few. Ad costs vary with the placement, size, and frequency of the ad.

Specialty Advertising

Specialty advertising such as billboards, regional publications, community websites, and school newspapers are secondary advertising mediums. They are ideal for building brand awareness and helping support an existing ad campaign. However, they cannot do the heavy lifting. If you want a more intimate connection with your target audience, use print advertising, television, radio, flyers, and social media.

Billboards

The advantage of using billboards is they offer long-term, high visibility, and repetition of your message for the commuter who will be exposed to your message several times a day. The cost for this type of advertising varies depending on the location of the billboard. The higher the volume of traffic the higher the costs. Also, the size of the billboard, whether it's a lighted or an electronic board, as well as the length of the showing will determine your costs. Usually, the minimum showing is one month, but all of this is open to negotiation.

Social Media – The New Frontier

The new frontier in the advertising world is social media. The power of social media networks when it comes to serving highly relevant and persuasive ads is almost unparalleled.

One of the most enticing aspects of social media advertising is its affordability. Social media advertising is cheaper than any form of advertising available today. It provides the flexibility to create an advertising campaign and drive the results no matter how large or small your advertising budget is, making it a great option for clubs of all sizes and budgets.

The conundrum is which social media network(s) is the best fit for Optimist International and your club. In the following narrative, we will explore the pros and cons of the six major networks and how they might aid you in promoting Optimist International and your club.

Social Media Advertising

There is an abundance of ad formats available on the various social media networks including single-image ads, video ads, sponsored posts, and multi-image or carousel ads. The possibilities are practically endless, only limited by your creativity and imagination.

However, to effectively use social media for advertising you must understand what ad formats and objectives will work best for your target audience(s).

Achieving good results can sometimes be rather challenging if you don't grasp the basic requirements of each network.

Types of Social Media Advertising

Although there is a commonality of formats, such as sponsored posts across most of the social media platforms, each network has its own distinct characteristic relative to advertising.

When choosing a social network for your advertising campaign here are some factors to consider:

- The size of the platform and its audience
- The demographics of the audience(s) available
- The type of ad you wish to run and the assets required to do so
- The cost of the ads
- The goals and objectives of your ad campaign

Using these criteria will help you in determining which social media network or networks would be a good fit for your club.

Facebook

When it comes to social media advertising, Facebook is the king. In digital ad spending, it has the second-highest market share, only surpassed by Google. Its variety of ad formats, placements, and target options is second to none, and its audience size is enormous.

Another advantage is you can use Facebook Ads Management to run ads not just across Facebook's various placements, but also on Instagram, Messenger, and Facebook's own Ad Network. Furthermore, the ad placements are not outrageously expensive. With Optimist International's varied audience, Facebook is a great platform to launch an advertising campaign.

Instagram

Instagram is the choice of younger social media users. Most Instagram users are below the age of 35, making it a perfect fit for an advertising campaign directed toward the younger demographic audience.

Be aware that Instagram is a highly visual platform, and to be effective in its use and maximize its potential it requires high-quality images and videos. This platform also allows you to run a variety of ads from multi-image to story ads, and a whole lot more. Since Optimist International's outreach is to individuals who desire to volunteer, Instagram provides an ideal as well as an economical platform for clubs to advertise on.

LinkedIn

LinkedIn is primarily a business-to-business platform. It is an excellent medium for generating leads, recruiting, and raising awareness about specific service products. Since it is a business-to-business platform its outreach is somewhat smaller than Facebook or Instagram.

This platform has a higher cost-per-click (CPC) and cost-per-1000 (CPM) click rate but a significantly lower click-through rate than Facebook or Instagram. Although it still has over 630 million users. The click-through rate is important because it indicates how well your ad is performing. The most common ad formats involve sponsored content like the InMail, text ads, carousel ads, video ads a user sees on their LinkedIn feed.

The power of LinkedIn advertising is its detailed target options. With LinkedIn not only can you target age and location, but it gives you the option to also segment your target audience(s), based on company industry, company size, company name, company followers, job seniority, fields of study, degrees, member schools, job function, job title, member skills, member groups, member interests, and more.

This gives you the ability to construct the appropriate audience segments in which to concentrate your advertising efforts, so your message gets to the right people while allowing you to have more control over your advertising investment.

Pinterest

The Pinterest social media platform is an extremely powerful promotional tool when it is used to connect online with your target audiences. It can help you increase your club's membership and brand awareness.

Pinterest offers a mix of free and paid advertising tools, and by combining both you can achieve a more potent campaign and an increase in the return on your advertising dollars. Plus, Pinterest has one of the lowest costs per click (CPC) in social media advertising.

With the variety of ad formats from sponsored pins (paid advertising) to multi-image or carousel and video ads, this platform can assist you in delivering an effective advertising campaign to a specific audience. Pinterest has a wide range of targeting options to aid an advertiser that includes interests, keywords, customer lists, remarketing, selected audiences, and more. Another great advantage of using this platform for your advertising is there is less competition compared to other channels such as Facebook, and Instagram.

Snapchat

Size-wise Snapchat is the smallest of the social media platforms, but it is a favorite among younger audiences.

Organizations that use this mobile platform for advertising use it to drive more traffic to their primary advertising venues and websites, boost audience engagement, raise brand awareness, and more.

Most social media ad formats rely on vertical images or videos. The Pinterest platform offers the user more creative formats such as Augmented Reality Lenses (AR Lenses) and filters geared to help advertisers stand out more and 6 second, non-skippable video

ads while providing all the usual targeting methods used by the other social media networks.

TikTok

The TikTok social media platform is largely favored by the younger generations but is fast becoming a favorite network for older users. This provides an advertiser with a broad range of users and the opportunity to engage your most relevant target audiences.

A short-form mobile video platform TikTok provides its users the opportunity to reach out to a large community. It also allows a user to engage TikTok's widespread audience.

TikTok advertising is a short and sweet approach to marketing, consisting of 15-60 second videos. This format gives your ads more value since they are unlikely to get lost in a sea of competing ads prevalent on other social media platforms. In addition, TikTok is an easy-to-use self-service advertising platform enabling you to create powerful and engaging ad campaigns in a matter of minutes.

Another big advantage of TikTok is it gives you the ability to target a specific audience using age, gender, location, interests, and more. You can also create custom audiences and lookalike audiences to reach people like your existing members.

And finally, the TikTok platform includes measurement tools to assist you in tracking your ads' performance.

Choosing the Right Social Media Channel

We hope this brief overview of the primary social media networks will give you a basic understanding of how they work and which ones may work best in helping you implement your club's or district's marketing goals. If you are still on the fence about which one to use here are a few recommendations:

- Don't be afraid to experiment. Start slow with one channel to test the waters. Because of their popularity and ease of use Facebook or Instagram are good starting points.

- If you are focusing on a particular target audience, explore the social network they are most likely to use. For example, the younger generations are more likely to use Snapchat or look for inspiration on Pinterest. Whereas if you are after sponsors or partners from the corporate or business arena you might look to the business-to-business network with a LinkedIn campaign that focuses on that audience. The more research you do the better your odds of success will be.
- To build brand awareness and engagement you would probably be wise to choose the Twitter, Instagram, or Snapchat networks, depending on which one best fits your target office.
- To boost activity attendance or promote a fundraiser a dynamic ad on Facebook and Pinterest might be your choice. The bottom line is to experiment with the different networks until you find the one that works best for your club or district. The more you experiment and learn, the more proficient you will become in choosing the right course of action in choosing a social network to promote and advertise your club or district.

Tips for Successful Social Media Advertising

No matter which social advertising approach you choose, there are certain steps you can take to increase your chances of success:

- First be sure to have clearly defined goals for each campaign you plan to launch. For instance, don't launch an outreach campaign to the public, when you are trying to solicit business sponsorships or partners.
- Develop a thorough understanding of who your target audience is. Don't lose sight of the fact that you need to segment your social media advertising to match user preferences.
- Craft your advertising messages and formats to relate to each target audience. For example, you will want to craft a different message for newly targeted audiences versus an audience you have previously reached out to.

- Make sure you arrange to get performance data from the various social media platforms you use to be able to accurately evaluate the success of your campaign.
- The quality of your imagery, videos, and written text is essential for a successful social media advertising campaign. Make sure everything you use is of the highest quality, high resolution, and creatively designed.
- Establish a landing page for your marketing and advertising campaign and review it constantly to ascertain the effectiveness of the campaign and the next steps you should take.

The Long and Short of Advertising: Cost versus Expectations

Optimist International is a volunteer youth service organization. We don't sell a product or service. So, the direct results of any advertising are hard to measure. Although a boost in phone calls, an increase in membership, or an increase in visits to websites and Facebook pages following an ad campaign gives evidence the promotion was successful, in other cases, the results may be more subjective. Those intangible results can include increased goodwill and brand awareness.

An advertising campaign can cost anywhere from several hundred dollars to thousands of dollars depending on the type of campaign your club chooses to run, the media networks you select, and the duration of the campaign. However, it is important to keep in mind that regardless of your budget advertising will enhance your club's public relations efforts with the local media and showcase your club and Optimist International to your community and the public.

Public relations involves many parts and techniques. Each club has to develop its promotional efforts based on the resources it has available. Advertising is not a requirement, but an instrument in our Public Relations Kit to assist us in telling Optimist International's and your club's story while increasing your outreach into the community you serve. The important thing is to understand the benefits of advertising and embrace it. Make sure you include in your planning public relations and advertising as a line item in your budget. Test the waters and ease into it. Look at the possibilities of combining your resources with other clubs in your area to maximize your efforts and reduce the overall cost to each club.

Section 9: Public Service Advertising Opportunities

What are Public Service Opportunities? Public Service Advertising can be broadcast (Public Service Announcements) or print (Public Service Ads) and is used by a multitude of organizations daily. PSAs cannot promote profit-seeking organizations, nor can commercial logos or products be shown or mentioned. PSAs are messages produced for public benefit on behalf of a non-profit organization. PSAs are a cost-effective way to raise awareness about the benefits to the community that your club can provide. Your club may be able to take advantage of the fact that nearly all forms of media will use PSAs to fill unsold airtime and print space. Unfortunately, media outlets receive hundreds of PSA's and the demand for print and airtime far exceeds the availability.

Because of the competition for PSA time and space, your success in placing a PSA may depend on how well you market locally. According to a survey of broadcast TV stations, a large majority indicated that "local information/benefit" was a significant factor in airing the PSA.

Where do I send my PSA? For larger TV and radio stations, contact the community affairs, public affairs, or public service director. At smaller outlets, the contact may be the program director, news director, or general manager. For print outlets, contact the advertising manager, production manager, or editor.

Create a list of local media with the contact information and include deadlines to submit PSAs. When the list is completed, contact the members of your list to introduce yourself and your club. Do this by email, fax or letter. This will pave the way for a call or meeting.

When making media contacts, be prepared with the following:

- Understand that the media is mainly interested in how your PSA relates to its audience.
- Know the information in the PSA completely. Be prepared to answer questions.
- Be compelling. Stories about how local people are affected can be powerful.
- Offer other assistance. Encourage the media to cover your club in other ways.
- Build a partnership. Perhaps members of the media would volunteer to judge a contest or participate in a project.

- Don't be a nuisance. Don't keep calling to ask when your PSA will appear on air or in print. The PSAs are placed on a time/space-available basis, so your contact can't give you a guarantee of placement.

Radio Copy – How to Write a PSA

Here are some steps in producing a PSA:

- **Be Authentic** – PSAs must be linked to a tax-exempt, non-profit organization with local or national recognition. When requesting the PSA, send the appeal on club letterhead, signed by the president. Include website and social media links for more information about your club. Showing that your club is active in the community and making an impact will increase your credibility and improve your odds of having your message air.
- **Keep it Simple** – PSAs must be written succinctly. Include the facts such as who, what, when, where, why, and how. Use words that grab the listeners' attention. Focus on what you want the listener to do or remember after they see or hear your PSA. Have others review your content before release.
- **Carefully Select Format and Delivery** – Create a: 60-second and a: 30-second recorded version of your PSA. Include the scripts when sending. The station may use the recording or may use one of their hosts to read it on air. Sometimes a station may request a: 15-second version. Look online for examples and listen to them for guidance. Find out from your media contact the method and timing of delivery they prefer.

What Needs to be Included in PSAs

- A warm, welcoming voice that provides positive information about a club in a community. People want to join a community group to network and help and serve others in their communities.
- PSAs can be multi-functional and used not only on radio and television but also on Facebook, TikTok, Instagram, and other social media platforms. With technology as it is, people can stream anything and pass through all commercials with the click of a button.

- Keep PSAs to 15-30 seconds. Studies show an adult’s attention span is about 20 seconds.
- Always include a call to action or a link to obtain more information. A link to a club website would be ideal. Of course, this will only work and add value if the website is well maintained and continuously updated.
- When having a child speak, have the child begin the narrative and end it with an adult. The rationale behind this approach is it signifies the adult supporting the child.
- When using the various social media platforms, simply state “visit www.optimist.org” or the local club’s website. In today’s world, most people want an email address, a text number, or a website link rather than a telephone number. Include these as part of a call-to-action line in your PSAs.
- Suggest viewers visit www.optimist.org to obtain information on Junior Optimist International membership or establishing a new Junior Optimist Club.
- Be sure to include diverse audiences in your PSAs. Diversity is the key to a successful and viable organization. Optimist International's mission is to reach out to all people and make them feel welcome.
- Speak in terms of students or youth, not male or female, girl or boy.
- Where appropriate use more than one dominant language. For example, have part of the PSA spoken in English and the remainder in another dominant language in your community, such as Spanish or French.
- Have PSAs for all of Optimist International’s programs.

Keep it Simple – PSAs must be written succinctly. Include the facts such as who, what, when, where, why, and how. Use words that grab the listeners’ attention. Focus on what you want the listener to do or remember after they see or hear your PSA. Have others review your content. Listed below are examples of general and club-specific PSAs:

- *How would you like to make a difference in a child’s life – be a force of positive change in your community?*

For over a hundred years, Optimist International has been bringing out the best in youth, our communities, and ourselves through the work of local clubs in your community. Want to make a difference in someone’s life while improving your

own? Join your local Optimist club today. Dare to be the best! It's a decision you'll never regret.

- *Have you heard? The Optimist Club of ____[Name]____ is hosting an **Essay Contest** for students in our community. The Essay Contest is sponsored by Optimist International to give young people the opportunity to write about their own opinions regarding the world in which they live. The approach can encompass a young person's personal experience, the experience of their country, or a more historical perspective. In addition to developing skills for written expression, participants can win a college scholarship! Interested students must contact their local Optimist Club. For more information, go to ____[Club Website]____.*
- *Would you like to help out at events in our community put on by the Optimist Club of ____[Name]____? We are looking for help from adults who would like to give back to their community. The Optimist Club of ____[Name]____ is a non-profit corporation with a mission of providing hope and a positive vision. Optimists bring out the best in youth, our communities, and ourselves. We are made up of adults who want to impact our community positively. We invite you to join us. For more information, go to ____[Club Website]____.*
- *Are you looking for something to do with your time and talents that would be helpful to the youth, community, and yourself? If so, the Optimist Club of ____[Name]____ invites you to help participate in community service programs that are dedicated to bringing out the best in youth in the community. We are made up of a diverse group of adults who want to impact our community positively. For more information, go ____[Club Website]____. We hope you will join us with your time and talents.*
- *[Child speaking] Hey, have you heard that the Optimist Club of ____[Name]____ is having an Oratorical Contest and we have an opportunity to win scholarships? [Adult]. Yes, that is true, the Optimist Oratorical Contest gives youth the chance to speak their voice. More than \$150,000 in college scholarships are funded by the Optimist International Foundations and are awarded annually from this program. For more information, on your local Club's Oratorical Contest, please go to ____[Club Website] ____.*

- *If you would like to work with youth and families, the optimist club of __ (Name) __ has an opportunity for you to make an impact on children's lives. We are looking for positive adults to collaborate with the Explore Children's Museum by working a brat stand. All proceeds will go directly to The Explore Children's Museum. Optimists bring out the best in youth, our communities, and ourselves by being passionate about learning opportunities for science, technology, engineering, and mathematics to children in a fun base atmosphere. We are excited to invite you to join us by visiting our website/Facebook page at _____.*
- *Something very exciting is happening! The Optimist Club of _____ is hosting the District TriStar Basketball event for kids in our district. TriStar Basketball provides opportunities for kids 6-13 years old to challenge themselves in passing, dribbling, and shooting skills. We provide a dedicated space for children to play, learn and grow and are a tremendous asset for our communities for years to come. Interested in providing a club contest in your community? Interested clubs should contact the Optimist Club of _____ for more information at _____.*
- *Optimists have a positive outlook in their communities and see the glass as half full. Would you like to meet Optimists that want to provide opportunities for youth in our community? We are a diverse group of positive like-minded individuals that care about impacting and making a difference in our community. Come out and hear more about what we do and why we provide amazing opportunities for the health and well-being of our youth. For more information check out our _____ website/Facebook _____ page.*
- *If you are an adult and new to the area, we invite you to meet a diverse group of positive like-minded individuals that care about impacting and making a difference in the community. Become an active part of our local community by bringing out the best in youth, our communities, and ourselves. As Optimists, we bring optimism to others and inspire hope. Come join us as we work with the youth and our community, building strong relationships that turn into lifelong*

friendships. For more information on the Optimist Club of __[Name]__, please visit our website at _____.

- *Many adults wonder what they are going to do when they retire. We have the answers for you. As Optimist, we make a difference in the lives of youth by helping them. Our lives are enhanced by the friends and relationships we make in Optimism. Our greatest personal fulfillment comes when we volunteer in our communities and being an Optimist helps us to be a better person and enjoy life more. In addition, we bring optimism to others and inspire hope. We invite you to become involved with the Optimist Club of __[Name]__. For more information, please visit our website at _____. We look forward to hearing from you.*

PSAs may be found on the Optimist International website, www.optimist.org under *Member Resources, Marketing. Club Marketing/PR Kit, PSA – Radio Public Service Announcements.*

Print Copy

- Design your poster or graphic using design software. Make the poster eye-catching and convey your message through less text.
- Use icons, images, colorful backgrounds, and a variety of fonts to convey your message to the audience. Be sure you have permission for the images you use. Some software packages offer public domain images for your use.
- Have others review your poster for content and consistency.
- Produce your output as a high-resolution image for distribution to print media.
- Share your poster on a variety of social media platforms.

Section 10: Planning a Project or Event

At the heart of Optimist International's mission are the projects and events local clubs organize and conduct every year. Using the planning materials provided by Optimist International, Optimist volunteers lead their respective communities in putting on oratorical contests, essay contests, communications contests for deaf and hard of hearing, Optimist Day, Safety on Wheels, junior golf tournaments, Musical Happiness Competitions, and much more. (Section 16, the Annex for this handbook provides the planning materials for each of these programs.

- Well in advance of its implementation choose the event or project your club would like to do and assemble a planning team to assist you in putting it together.
- To keep everyone focused and on track write a mission statement specifying your goals and objectives.
- Develop an outline for the project or event in written form. Be sure to include the five W's (who, what, when, where, and why), and don't forget the "how" you are planning to do it.
- Contact and invite other clubs, organizations, civic leaders, etc. to participate in and support your efforts.
- Look for possible partnerships and sponsorships.
- If possible, involve your local JOI Clubs, students, and other youth groups to help you.
- Develop and initiate your public relations and marketing plan.
 - Contact the local media for promotional support.
 - Launch your advertising campaign.
 - Develop an event script and timeline (a step-by-step, timed approach to the project or event). If necessary, provide a script for the master of ceremonies and a timeline to keep everyone on time and the event flowing smoothly.
 - Send out press releases.
 - Follow up press releases with telephone calls.
- Conduct your project or event.
- Discuss and evaluate your event's or project's successes and failures with your project team. This will provide you with valuable information for planning future events and projects.

The above steps may appear to be a simplistic approach to planning an event or project, but if you follow these steps over time, you will find yourself being successful in most of your service and fundraising endeavors. Always keep in mind your event or project is a club-coordinated event for your community. It requires a team effort involving club members, as well as community volunteers. The key is to develop and organize your event or project to get “buy-in” or “ownership” from club members and the community. If this is accomplished the potential for the success of your event or project is multiplied.

Begin planning for your event or project about five to six months in advance. This allows for such time-consuming things as permits, insurance certificates, approvals, and other necessary documentation that may be required to be completed in a timely manner. In addition, the sooner you begin planning for your project or event, the more successful your public relations and marketing efforts will be in attracting community participation.

Remember the primary objective of your public relations is to increase the awareness of your club and Optimist International in your community. Putting together a major Optimist-sponsored event or project in your community is an important part of creating an image for your club and the Optimist International brand. An added benefit is that it provides your club with an excellent opportunity to recruit new members.

Partnerships and Sponsorships

Very few clubs have unlimited funds to conduct community-wide events and projects so additional revenue sources are needed. A great way to solve this problem is to seek out local partnerships and sponsorships.

Taking this approach to an event or project provides many benefits including increased public awareness and funding. Establishing partnerships and sponsorships is an excellent way to expand your club’s impact in the community, build creditability, and create a mutually beneficial arrangement with local companies, the media, and other community organizations.

Events or projects not requiring a substantial outlay of dollars may lend themselves to partnerships with the local media, such as newspapers, radio stations, or television stations, or perhaps a government entity such as a city's recreation and parks department. Allowing these entities to have their name associated with your club’s

event or project provides you with a partner or partners to help you with the event's or project's promotion and marketing. An arrangement that will benefit both your club and the partner.

In situations where your event or project requires a substantial outlay of dollars to underwrite your club's expenditures looking for sponsorships from local businesses may be the avenue you want to take. Go after sponsors just as you would a new member – just ask. Use your imagination, the possibilities are endless. One thing is for certain. If you don't ask you won't get it, and it doesn't cost you anything to ask.

For a partnership or sponsorship to work the benefits to the partner or sponsor must be clearly defined. Also, you will need a detailed budget outlining the expenditures involved and the ability to show the amount of exposure the sponsor will obtain from the venture. Working in tandem, both you and your sponsor can work out the details of how the event or project will be named and publicized.

In negotiating a partnership or sponsorship be sure your club and the Optimist brand will be prominently displayed. Depending on the funding involved some companies or organizations may require top billing as the sponsor of the event.

If this is the case, try to negotiate a cosponsor arrangement where the event showcases both your partner or sponsor and your club. However, the bottom line is to keep your partner or sponsor satisfied and happy.

Keep in mind if you choose to pursue donations and financial support from large national companies with local outlets like Coca-Cola, Home Depot, Wal-Mart, Kohl's, etc. you will likely be required to go through a formal application process. This normally involves filling out forms that describe the details of your event, the funding requirements, and the number of people affected. This process needs to be completed well in advance of your event or project to allow time for the application to be reviewed and a decision made. In many cases, the store manager has a certain amount of discretionary funds at his or her disposal. These usually run between \$1,500 to \$2,000. However, larger funding usually must be approved by the corporate office. Funding and support from these companies is not impossible, but you must remember these organizations are continuously bombarded by requests for donations, sponsorships, and funding support. So, you will probably find you will be more successful if you focus on regional and local businesses.

When looking for partners or sponsors preparation and persistence are the names of the game. Don't be discouraged if you are turned down in your initial efforts. Just keep trying. Make sure you're always prepared and can answer any questions that are asked. Also, before contacting any business or company, poll your members to see if any of them have an inside connection that can help you get past the gatekeepers and to the decision-makers.

Once a sponsor or partner is secured and brought onboard be sure you have a strategy in place for recognizing and thanking them throughout the process – before, during, and after the event.

As your event or project comes to fruition never overlook the reason your club is doing it – the Optimist mission of bringing out the best in youth, our communities, and ourselves. Make sure your sponsors and partners fully understand the “why” of the Optimist mission and the reason for the event or project you are asking them to support. Once they connect and embrace our goal, you will find they will buy in to the event or project more readily.

Keep in mind there is no right way to secure a partner or sponsor. It takes patience, persistence, and hard work. Just keep in mind when approaching a business or company for a partnership or sponsorship the bottom line for their involvement is how is this event or project going to benefit us.

The goal for your club is to have a well-organized, well-funded, and well-attended event that has a positive impact on the community your club services.

Section 11: How to Approach Media Interviews

The media landscape is ever-changing which is why it is so important for you to develop strategies and techniques to assist you in connecting with your audience. A great way to do this is through media interviews. The benefit is they provide you with a platform to share your club and Optimist International's message while helping to provide a human connection to the Optimist International brand.

Media interviews provide the opportunity for your club to get its name and the Optimist brand in front of a large audience. This makes them a powerful public relations and marketing tool. They provide you with the opportunity to showcase your club and its activities and message while building your club's and Optimist International's credibility in the community your club serves. Media interviews allow you to offer insight and value into who Optimists are and what we do. It is extremely important to approach an interview as a messaging platform and not a selling one.

Be aware that not everyone is comfortable being a spokesperson and the center of attention. The fear of public speaking ranks near the top of all human fears. So, it is natural to be cautious when the media reaches out to interview you or your club. However, when the situations arise, they can provide you with an excellent opportunity to showcase your club's activities and spread the Optimist International story.

Taking the time to understand a few key principles and how to develop your message points will go a long way in helping you to navigate an interview successfully. Becoming a good spokesperson takes time and requires practice to develop a relaxed controlled demeanor. Listed below are a few tips to assist you in having a successful interview:

Know Your Message

Before you agree to do an interview make sure you have a story to tell and know your goals. Ask the following questions: *"What do you hope to accomplish?"* If you are uncomfortable with the message, you've prepared and talking about it is not second nature to you, forego the interview. Why? Because there is not a lot to focus on during an interview, and the last thing you would want to do is to be stuck trying to remember the key points in the middle of the conversation.

Prior to the interview, determine the two or three key messages you want to get across to your audience. Study your message points, memorize them, and practice

them until you can deliver them in a smooth and coherent way. This will help you stay on message during the interview.

Your message should be positive and impactful so it will resonate with your audience. Be prepared so even if you are not able to discuss all your message points during the interview you will have at least been able to share some very concise and key messages about your event or the Optimist brand.

Keep Your Answers Short and to the Point

During the interview don't over-answer. People's attention spans are short, so speaking longer does not necessarily mean a better interview. Short answers are much better than long ones. Audiences can digest information quickly and if you take too long to respond to the interviewer's question you will likely lose your audience. In addition, keeping your responses short will help you drive your key message home while allowing you to transition into additional topics you might want to discuss. This also helps put you in control of the interview.

Remember to speak clearly, avoid filler words such as "um" and "uh," and be sure your points are simple and easily understood. Make sure you stay away from jargon or language people don't use in everyday conversation. You don't want to leave your audience confused which will make it difficult to connect with you.

Use Moments of Silence to Your Advantage

Reporters and interviewers frequently use silence as a tool to keep an interviewee talking. The way they use this technique is the interviewer allows the interviewee to complete their response to the question asked and then sits quietly, thus making the interviewee feel they should continue talking. This is perfectly okay if you have information that adds value to your message, or you would like to transition to another topic. However, you are speaking just to fill space, don't do it because it can sometimes lead you to provide too much information. Also, when answering a question, never overlap the interviewer's question. Let them finish, pause for a moment, and then begin your answer. This pause gives you time for thought and processing your response and demonstrates you've heard the question and that it's being deeply considered. It also signals your respect for the interviewer.

Be in Control

One of the biggest mistakes people make is going to a media interview without a prepared agenda. Take the time to understand what is relevant to your audience and plan, so you will be able to meet both your goals as well as those of the interviewer with the results being an informative and interesting interview for everyone.

The key to achieving this and ensuring you control the narrative and leading it to where you want it to go is your preparation. Remember it's your story and you want to be able to deliver your message in a smooth natural way. Be aware that a seasoned interviewer is a master at sensing the precise moment to jump in with a question designed to provoke you into giving a newsworthy answer. Their prime motivation is to find information that will pique the interest of their audience. So, remember to be prepared and ready for anything. It is up to you to introduce interesting and positive information into the conversation.

Use these key speaking techniques, bridging, flagging, listing, and cherry-picking to assist you in delivering your key message and assist you in controlling the interview.

Bridging – Bridging is a powerful means of taking charge and controlling a media interview. This technique is used during an interview to move from a quick answer to a question into an interviewee's message points. If done well, bridging significantly increases the probability your message will appear in the final article, video, or broadcast. Bridging is simply moving from an answer to a question and refocusing or redirecting the interviewer to concentrate on the most important, relevant part of your message. Some examples of bridging phrases:

- The real issue here...
- What this boils down to is...
- Yet, it's really a case of...
- What is important...
- And what's most important is...
- This is just the first step...

Don't confuse bridging with avoidance. You should always answer the interviewer's questions, but don't feel you have to limit your response to just that one question.

It's a common misconception during an interview that you only need to make your point once. However, the more you make the same point, the better the chance of your message being aired on the radio or television or printed in the

newspaper. Keep in mind, as a rule of thumb, if any interview lasts 15 minutes or more you must make your point repeatedly because only a small part of what you say will be used in the published story.

Flagging – Flagging is an effective technique allowing you to put more emphasis on certain points that support your key message. Think of flagging as a way of telling your best friend the most important point of an issue. It gets the listener to stop and pay attention. It also helps the interviewer sort out the key point quickly. An example of flagging phrases:

- The most important fact to remember is...
- It boils down to...
- The big news is...
- Our entire focus and goal is...
- There are many facets to the problem – but you must remember...

The use of flagging always leads to your most important message point. By returning to your key point several times during the interview you will help the interviewer and your audience to understand what is important about your message.

Listing – Another effective speaking technique is to organize your responses into a list. It provides you when doing the interview time to collect and finish your thoughts. It also ensures you the opportunity to pace yourself and not get off target. And it allows you to flag the most important elements of your message.

A rule of thumb to use is to focus on three points – if you aim for too many you have a good chance of losing your connection with the audience. For example, the interviewer asks, “What do you think contributed to the early success of your club? You answer, “There were three key factors. The first is...

Cherry-Picking – Many times an interviewer will introduce a group of questions. When this happens, you should seize the opportunity to refocus the discussion by “cherry-picking” the question that provides the best lead-in to your main message.

Never Lose Your Cool

No matter how you feel an interview is progressing, never lose your composure or allow yourself to be provoked into saying or doing something that will put you, your club, or Optimist International in a bad light. Stay calm and never take anything personally. Don't let the interviewer goad you into answering an uncomfortable question leading you to say something or do something that turns into newsworthy sound bites. Remember when you are dealing with a journalist you are always on the record.

Rehearse

Practice, practice, practice is the key to helping you feel more confident and at ease during an interview. The interview gives you an excellent opportunity to share the Optimist mission and generate positive impressions of your club and Optimist International. Keep in mind that a simple seemingly trivial media interview may be read, heard, or viewed by millions of people. However, if you go into the interview unprepared and unsure how you want to convey your message, you increase your stress by having to think on your feet quickly when responding to questions. This lack of preparedness becomes obvious to the audience and dilutes your message. By continuously practicing until you are comfortable with what you want to say and the way you want to say it you will be sure to capture the audience's interest and assure your message is received.

An excellent technique to help you prepare for an interview is to role-play to help you determine:

- Are your message points coming across clearly?
- Are your answers concise?
- Are your key messages believable or do they need more support information?

Be Yourself

During your interview as you are sharing your story or message be confident and enthusiastic in your delivery. Let your passion for the Optimist International mission and the work your club is doing in the community shine. The audience you are speaking to wants to get a feel for who you are and be able to connect with you. Showing you are knowledgeable and passionate about your message and the work you do gives them the trust that you know your stuff. Media interviews give you a great opportunity to showcase your club and the Optimist International brand.

Recognize this is your moment, and you control the conversation. It's up to you to engage the interviewer, set the boundaries of the discussion, and deliver an outstanding and informative interview.

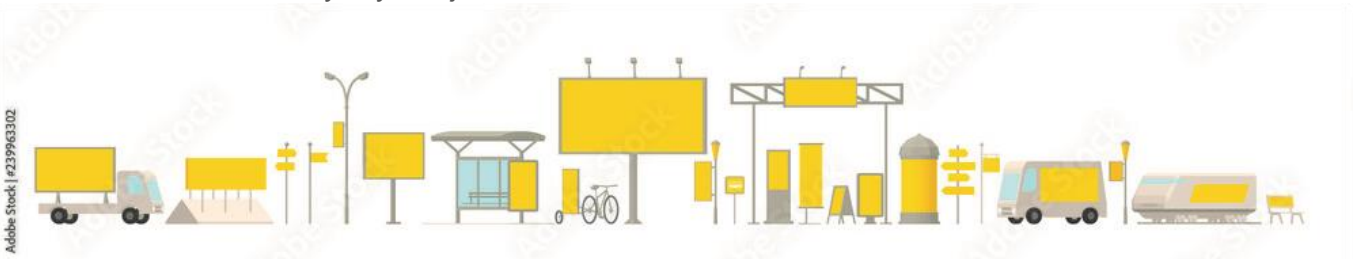
Your Appearance

What you wear to your interview is an important part of your planning. It must be targeted and strategic. The objective is for the audience to see you as you want them to see you – as an embodiment of your message, your club, and the Optimist International brand.

Wearing apparel featuring the Optimist International brand is always appropriate. However, in some cases, depending on the situation and the audience, you may want to dress in a more professional manner. The bottom line is to resonate with who you are – the way you dress should be in line with your personality and style and enhance who you are.

Make Eye Contact

Probably the most important aspect. If you're being interviewed face-to-face, make sure you keep your focus on the interviewer (not the camera). If you're being interviewed remotely, e.g., for a TV news segment, the camera becomes the interviewer and that's where you look. Eye contact is one of the most significant aspects of non-verbal communication, in everyday life just as in front of the TV cameras.



Section 12: Outdoor Advertising

Overview

There are many ways to advertise, but outdoor or billboard advertising gives your club or district the benefit of a 24/7 presence, big, bold, colorful displays, and targeted coverage to thousands of people daily with a lower cost-per-thousand exposure than other media sources.

Even more exciting is the fact that in some markets you can negotiate this type of advertising for free.

In today's advertising environment outdoor marketing comes in a variety of shapes and sizes, static or digital, on vehicles, and numerous other nonconventional platforms.

One key advantage of outdoor advertising is that it exposes the viewer to your message during their daily activities, and it is always there for everyone passing it to see for as long as the message is posted. Depending on its location an outdoor billboard can reach between 10,000 and 200,000 viewers per day.

As with any profit-driven organization, outdoor advertising companies seek to keep their billboard locations occupied with paid messages. However, most companies have vacant advertising sites. These vacant locations provide you with the opportunity to negotiate a billboard posting as a public service at little or no cost to you. The outdoor advertising company will post your billboard advertisement at a specific location until they obtain a paying client. The way these agreements usually work is that you would pay a fee for producing the artwork for the message you desire on the billboard and the company would install it for free. Once the billboard location is sold to a paying client your billboard would be moved to another vacant location.

Outdoor advertising companies like to keep their billboards occupied so providing space for your message allows them to do this while at the same time providing a public service.

Billboard Specifications

Billboards normally come in three basic sizes:

- 14' x 48' designed for freeway/interstate viewing, with visibility of 500 feet
- 12' x 24' designed for highway viewing with visibility of 300 feet
- 6' x 12' designed for street viewing with a visibility of 150 feet

Advances in outdoor/billboard advertising have introduced digital and LED signs with rotating messages and artwork controlled by computers. These types of billboards/signs offer several advantages over conventional static billboards. First, you don't have to do any printed artwork or manual labor to erect them, and second, you can change or update your message at any time. However, there is one major drawback with this type of billboard/sign. Your message is one of many in rotation, so you lose your exclusivity.

Keep Your Design Work Simple

Success in using outdoor advertising is to keep it simple. Your design needs to use bright, bold, eye-catching imagery with limited text. The most successful billboards tell the whole story using a graphic or photographic image supported by a short sentence. A great example of this approach is Nike's "Just Do It!" campaign – simple but very impactful.

Shown below is an example of a possible Optimist billboard:



Using your imagination and creativity in designing your outdoor advertising and making sure your message is brief and impactful is the key to being successful with this type of advertising.

A billboard's text should be large. The bigger the better. Large lettering allows reading at greater distances, giving the viewer more time to process your message. When designing a billboard, the minimum type size should be 18-inches tall, with 3 feet and taller being optimal. Extra-large text not only aids readability but also adds impact to your message.

When choosing a font for your billboard design simplicity is the key. The font you choose is a tool meant to get the information out to as many people as possible. You want it to be easy to read from a distance. Avoid using overly decorated fonts.

Another important element in having a successful billboard design is maintaining a good contrast between the background and text.

Finding Billboard Opportunities

With the abundance of billboards and outdoor advertising, there will most likely be some billboard locations in your area. However, finding one that is available and in the right location may be another story. In your search for available sites consider the following:

- Investigate the website outdoorbillboard.com and look under the heading “billboards for rent.”
- Check local listings such as the yellow pages, under “outdoor advertising” for contact information.
- Survey your local community and list the billboard locations you believe would offer the most potential for your message and then contact the companies to discuss vacancies and the possibility of displaying your message as a public service.

Making Your Pitch=

Optimist International is a not-for-profit community service organization operated exclusively for the promotion of social welfare, and as such its clubs and members work for the common good and general welfare of the youth and people in our communities. Though we are not a charitable organization our mission more than qualifies us for free public service advertising. There are numerous outdoor advertising companies open to assisting organizations such as ours by running free public service advertisements on their vacant signs during the period when they are unsold. It is up to you to take advantage of every opportunity that presents itself.

The best way to make your pitch for free public service advertising is to first develop an ongoing relationship with your local outdoor advertising company, letting them know about the impact your club is having on the surrounding community. Demonstrate to them the benefits they will receive by posting your message on their vacant billboards. Point out that by supporting your club and Optimist International they are enhancing their reputation as being committed to helping the youth in their community. To develop good relations, you should make a personal visit and discuss your club’s or district’s outreach needs. Invite them to one of your club’s activities so they can see firsthand what you do and experience the passion and excitement of your members. Always keep in mind the company is not required to offer the use of their vacant billboards – you want them to do it because they believe in your mission and the

benefits you provide to the community. You are asking them to help you spread the word.

Mobile Outdoor Advertising

Besides billboards and other static displays, mobile advertising is quite common in most metro areas. Vehicle wraps especially on buses and other transit vehicles are being used as well as commercial truck advertising where advertisements are attached to the sides and backs of eighteen-wheelers. Some companies have mobile billboards that are driven to a specific location and set up for a contracted period of time. However, these methods of advertising can be quite expensive even though the cost decreases with the length of the posting. For example, the cost of a vehicle wrap advertisement can run from \$2,000 to \$10,000 depending on the size of the vehicle and the complexity of the design. Whereas advertising on a box truck will cost about \$600 per month plus a one-time \$600 setup charge.

Part of a Total Plan

If your club or district is successful in launching an outdoor advertising campaign, whether it's done free as a public service, or paid for by your club or district, it should be considered as just one element of your total public relations and marketing program. Your plan should include ads, flyers, posters, social media postings, television, radio, newspaper ads, and editorials, as well as club activities and events. The more exposure you receive the more likely your message will reach your target audiences and convince them to take the action you desire.

Answering a Call to Action

Every outreach program you launch should have a call to action. This is especially true for billboards. As previously stated, billboards are working 24/7. So, someone needs to be prepared when a contact is made. If it's a telephone number be sure the person chosen to answer has a cheerful, pleasant, and professional demeanor that fully represents Optimism and has all the information needed to answer questions and provide the appropriate information to the caller. If a website or email address is given, make sure it's short and easily readable. Keep in mind people are usually driving by billboard locations so contact information needs to be short, sweet, and easy to remember. Make sure someone is responsible for checking for these contacts and responds promptly.

Section 13: Getting Your Photographs and Artwork Published

In the past, if your club wanted a story or an event published in the newspaper you would simply prepare a press release, attach a few photographs to it, and send it to the local newspaper and hope for the best. Depending on the timeliness of your release and available column space your event or story might be published. It really was a hit-or-miss type of situation.

Today it is a different ballgame. With today's technology of computers and digital cameras, an event can happen, be documented, and published all in practically the same day. Although you will still need to write a press release, digital cameras allow photographs to be taken and emailed directly to a newspaper with captions included almost instantaneously.

A photograph directly embedded into a press release, which is appealing to editors if the photographs are of high quality. In today's fast-paced world, visuals are paramount in getting your event or story published.

Action Photographs versus Grip and Grinners

In certain situations, static photographs are unavoidable due to the subject matter. For example, an award is given to an individual or a large display check showing a donation to a charity. These events demand that a photograph be taken a certain way. People in the publishing world refer to these types of photographs as "Grip and Grinners." Such images are not very interesting but are necessary under the circumstances. Although your event may call for such a photograph, to make your story more exciting and dynamic, include an action photograph of the activities leading up to the award or donation. Show your club members and other volunteers doing a fundraiser or an activity with youth.

Simply put: the better the action photograph(s), the better the odds of the whole release/photograph package will have a chance of being published. Perhaps you have someone in your club very good at taking photographs. If they are amenable, appoint them as your club's official photographer. Be sure when you submit photographs to include a caption with each image briefly describing the event and identifying those individuals in the picture.

Photo Caption Stories

There will be instances when a story you have doesn't warrant an extensive news release or you may be up against a deadline prohibiting the writing of a full story to go with your

photographs. In such instances consider sending a photograph caption story. This type of story involves a good action photograph with a caption that tells an abbreviated story about the event. Newspaper editors love this type of story because it gives them a lot of leeway in how they can use them. They provide excellent filler for newspapers when they have column space to fill due to a shortage in editorial copy. Editors are always looking for good photographic stories from the local community. If your submission falls into this category and it includes good action photographs the chance it will be published goes up substantially.

Videos

Videos have brought a whole new dimension to the public relations/marketing world. Today it is possible to embed in your news release a link to short videos of your event posted on YouTube. If your news release contains both high-quality digital photographs and a short video it is considered what editors call a “full package”. These types of releases are very attractive to newspaper editors and television assignment editors because it gives them flexibility and more to work with.

Be sure when taking photographs, you shoot them with as high resolution as you can. You may be tempted to use a lower resolution to increase disk or storage space, but keep in mind publicity photographs used for print need to be at least 10 megapixels to maintain sharpness and give the editor the flexibility to enlarge or reduce the image to fit their layout and placement requirements. Make it a practice to have a separate memory disk for storing your high-resolution public relations photographs so you can build an archive of quality images for future use.

On the other hand, photographs that are to be used on the Internet and websites can be shot at a low resolution due to the smaller image requirements for electronic screens.

Over the years with the change in technology newsrooms have become smaller and news personnel reduced, so those Optimist clubs able to provide “full packages” of copy, photographs, and videos will find themselves ahead in the game, outshining other organizations and achieving a higher rate of placement in the media.

Videos That Tell a Story

With the birth of the digital age, a whole new world was opened to us giving us the ability to produce and share videos online and by DVD media. With very little investment in equipment and software, most anyone can produce an acceptable video. Not having videos on your website or part of your public relations and marketing campaign is an exception these days.

Videos can play a very big role in helping you tell the Optimist International story and motivating your members, potential members, and those that support your club to act. If you don't have videos in your public relations tool kit, consider using them. You'll add another dimension to your campaign as well as reap big benefits.

Possible Uses

Videos offer you numerous opportunities to showcase your club's projects and activities. The establishment of video servers such as YouTube, Flickr, Yahoo, and Google plus the social networking sites such as Facebook and Myspace allow you to share video content with just about anyone anywhere. These sites provide you with the proper platform and bandwidth at little or no cost. And if you can find someone who has experience in website coding, they may be able to assist you in creating or downloading a video player for your club's website, if you have the capacity to play videos from your server. If this is not possible, there are many other ways to link to videos that simplify the process. Also, inexpensive authoring programs along with cheap media provide you with the opportunity to create DVDs you can use for a variety of things, such as presentations, distribution to the media, making pitches to sponsors, or for club events.

When developing your public relations campaign videos provide you with a powerful tool for spreading the Optimist story. Here are a few ways you can use videos as a part of your public relations strategy:

Video News Releases

Press releases have a lot more impact when they include a short video. A video adds a whole other dimension to your message or story because it can capture the passion and emotion that may not come through in a written press release. Using a video allows you to feature interviews with the key people involved in your event or activity as well as show what happened during the event or what was accomplished. It helps validate your club's and Optimist International's mission. A video news release may not always be used in the broadcast, but it gives editors and news directors insight into what you and your club are about and whether to cover your story or event. For this reason alone, sending video news releases should become part of your club's strategy when dealing with the media.

Live Streaming

Live web streaming technology lets you create and share videos in real-time. To accomplish this all you need is an internet-enabled device, such as a smartphone or tablet, and a platform such as a website or an app. Live streaming has become very

popular and is relatively inexpensive providing your audience is small. Expenses increase with the purchase or rental of enough bandwidth to allow a larger audience to view the webcast simultaneously. However, you can also use streaming sites that provide inexpensive or free alternatives such as Ustream, YouCastr, etc. There are endless opportunities to broadcast your club's projects and events.

Tributes

Tribute videos are one of the most popular types of internet videos where still images are used to create tributes to a member, special event, or someone in the community. They usually involve short emotional stories produced to promote what a club is doing and the service activities it is involved in.

Documentaries of Club Events and Activities

Optimist Clubs seldom, if ever, take on a service project, event, or other activities to generate publicity. But not documenting your club's service efforts as they occur you miss the opportunity to promote and showcase your club, the Optimist International brand, and your club's commitment to the Optimist mission.

One shortcoming of Optimist International's public relations and marketing efforts is our lack of documentation of events and activities that showcase our club's services and activities within the community. We must do great things so the community around us knows about them. This knowledge gives us the ability to demonstrate the value and benefit of being an Optimist member, share our Optimism, and entice people to commit to choosing Optimism and joining the Optimist International organization.

Fundraising and Sponsorships

Using videos to put a face and place to your club activities and events is a powerful public relations and marketing tool. Being able to show your members' passion and emotions as they work with the youth in your community will go a long way in helping you when you are approaching businesses and other organizations seeking donations and sponsorships.

Why Videos are so Compelling?

We have all heard the saying, "A picture is worth a thousand words". Videos carry this statement to a new level. A moving image or emotional soundbite delivered in a well-produced video can deliver an extremely impactful and persuasive message. They are so compelling because the viewer can visually experience and hear the inflections and

emotions of your club members and witness club events and activities without having to mentally interpret a written story.

The power and impact of such videos can be expanded if you distribute and share their message on the internet and video-sharing sites. The possibilities are endless.

Professional versus Amateur Produced Videos

Inexpensive cameras and software allow almost anyone to produce a video. As a result, there has been a proliferation of low-quality videos flooding the internet and other video-sharing sites. One thing to keep in mind is a poorly produced video can sometimes do more harm than good to your club's public relations efforts. Just because someone has a camera and video software doesn't make them a video expert. Like other professions, people who have made video a career have acquired the expertise, techniques, and principles that come from years of experience, practice, and involvement in producing, shooting, and designing high-quality videos. These professionals bring a whole new dimension to video production.

However, unless you are very fortunate, there will probably be no one in your club trained in the specialized skills required to professionally produce a video. Most of us never think about what is required to make one video look more professional than another one, yet we can consciously or subconsciously discern the difference between good and bad video production. So, the idea of just throwing something together with your cell phone can sometimes do more harm than good. There are several key aspects to a video production that will affect a viewer's perception of

quality, they include:

Video Quality

Along with the overall resolution and quality of the images, you should also consider frame size (the proportional relationship between the width of an image and its height as well as pixel dimensions). In addition, you must also consider that when a video is transferred to a website there is a certain amount of encoding that occurs to compress or reduce the size of the file. This may cause a video to degrade in quality.

Framing and Composition

When you are producing a video, the way you frame your subject has a major impact on the way your audience perceives your video. Years of experience have established some basic rules of composition for videos like those established by artists and still

photographers. When these rules are ignored or broken the result is an audience that perceives the video as having a lack of quality or professionalism.

Lighting

Some people feel lighting is the essence of a good video or photography. It is evaluated by its quality and quantity. Too much light and everything gets washed out, not enough light, and everything becomes dark and gloomy. Lighting is also a great tool to direct or redirect a viewer's attention within the frame of your video. In addition, camera systems do not have the ability of the human eye to automatically adjust to the differences and intensity in the color of different light sources, so special attention must be taken to adjust your camera to compensate for this. Failure to do this may result in your subjects looking blue or yellow. The bottom line is that lighting is one of the key factors in what differentiates a professionally produced video from one produced by an amateur.

Sound and Music

The next time you watch a movie, pay particular attention to the music track and how it enhances the various scenes. Then imagine the scenes without the music. I think most of you would find it would make a very dull movie. Very often the importance of recording a good clean audio track when recording a video is overlooked. It is good practice to study effective recording techniques and record the very best audio possible when producing your video. Adding music and sounds to a video will have a big impact on the emotional reception of your viewers. Two identical videos with different soundtracks will give a viewer an entirely different message. So be sure as you plan your video to pay close attention to how you can use music to enhance the impact of your video's message.

Editing

Being able to edit your video is another key element in determining its impact on your viewers. Career video editors are very attentive to every scene and transition taking place in a video. Editing is in essence the controlling of every aspect of a video – the length of a scene, the rhythm and pace of the dialogue, and images – to achieve a certain mood and emotion the editor wants the audience to experience.

With editing being such an important part of the video process, volumes have been written about how to achieve it. However, this section is not intended to be a primer on video production, but an attempt to make you aware if you are considering incorporating video into your public relations, marketing, and outreach planning the

impact it can have on a viewer's perception of your club, its community service activities, and Optimist International.

As you strive for quality in your videos be reminded that compelling content can make up for a lot of imperfections. An emotional interview or heartfelt thank you can go a long way in drawing the viewer to your video content. Moments like these are priceless and can say more about what your club does in your community than a well-produced video that doesn't have any appeal to the audience viewing it. You should not do a video unless you feel it will be useful in your outreach to your community.

If you contemplate producing a video, remember its strength is in its ability to convey the emotion and substance of the story you want to tell. When you begin developing your message or story look for the elements that can be best told by using video.

Quick Tips

Keep It Short and Simple (KISS) – Good impactful videos are usually short and to the point. You want it to be an attention-getter. One of the more difficult things to do when you are editing a video is to extract the most important information necessary to get your point across. There are situations where a longer video is appropriate, but you should always consider who will be viewing your message and their attention span when you produce them.

The Importance of Audio – There is continuous debate and numerous studies done to determine which is more important in a video – the sound or the visuals. Most experts agree that people get more information from images than they do from the audio, but they also agree the two need to work together. Be sure when you produce a video you pay close attention to the quality of the soundtrack. Nothing turns people off more than a video with a poorly produced audio track. When you are setting up for your

video make sure you properly place your microphones so they will pick up people's conversations and remarks. Also, don't forget about selecting appropriate background music.

Stay Away from Special Effects – When you are producing a video it is quite tempting, especially for new video editors, to fall prey to all the video effects that come with their software package. The more experienced editors know cheesy wipes and other effects tend to make a video look amateurish. So, they will normally just use the basic video takes and simple dissolves to transition between scenes.

Be Mindful of Copywriting Infringements – As you develop your videos, make sure you have a basic understanding of Copyright laws. Before you choose your favorite music

track, a scene from a commercially produced video or your favorite movie, read the copyright information listed on the package.

Potential Resources to Assist You with Your Video Production

Unless your Club is very lucky, you will not have anyone with the talent and resources to produce your own videos. Listed below are a few ideas about where you can find the expertise and assistance to assist your Club in producing its own videos.

Schools

Many high schools and colleges have media departments or video production courses and very often they are looking for projects to give their students some practical real-world experience. Contact these institutions and see if you can't work out a deal with them to have their students assist you in exchange for a small fee and/or credits for producing the video. However, be sure before you begin the relationship to have a clearly defined agreement outlining what will be done, the responsibilities of each party, and ownership of the finished video. This approach might be ideal for developing public service announcements or documenting your Club's youth projects and events.

Video Production Companies

Another resource may be local video production companies. Many times, these companies are looking for pro bono work as a way of giving back to their community. Your video project, especially if it involves service to youth may be just what they are looking for. Remember, if you don't ask you won't get anything.

Television Stations

If you are fortunate enough to have an established relationship with your local television station, there is the possibility of working with them to do a special video program or feature about your Club, a special youth project, or an event your Club does. Once produced your Club can use it as a promotional tool and post it on your website, Facebook page, and other social media platforms. Just make sure when you approach them with your idea it is a worthwhile project with a strong impactful message for their viewers. Another important fact to remember is to approach these organizations early in the process so they readily document your Club's efforts during the event or activity, rather than after the fact.

Other Organizations

There is a wealth of videos from other organizations that might be of use to your Club to support your programs and initiatives. If you find something you can use, contact the organization to see if you are able to obtain a copy of the video you can use in your public outreach program.

YouTube and Other Video Hosting Sites

There are a variety of video hosting sites, such as YouTube that will allow you to either link to a video or provide you with an embedded code that will permit you to have the video play from your website or Facebook page. These may be videos produced by Optimist International, other organizations, or the public.

Optimist International

Optimist International has an assortment of videos a Club can use for free. For access to these visit www.optimist.org . You can either download the video or develop a link to them.

Members

Often when we are searching for resources and talent, we overlook one of our greatest assets – our members. There is an abundance of talented individuals throughout our membership. Many of them would jump at the opportunity to support your Club's public relations and marketing efforts. There is also the possibility one of your members knows someone with a talent or resource that would be willing to help you with your outreach efforts. So, be sure when you are developing your public relations campaign that you poll your Club's membership. You may find you have the talent or resources you need right in front of you.

Video as a Key Element in Your Public Relations and Marketing Campaign

As you become more involved in your Club's public outreach efforts you will find there are many parts to developing a successful public relations and marketing campaign. When these are used appropriately, they can be a real asset in telling your Club's story or promoting its events and activities. Including a video when you send out a press release or news advisory will help support your story by clarifying specific points or illustrating important aspects of your story or event. Never underestimate the power of a short interview with one of the individuals featured in your video. It can help you convince a decision maker to cover your story further or support your event or cause.

If you want to keep your audiences involved and generate positive publicity, your Club's use of videos on your website, Facebook page, or video links in your posted stories is an excellent way to energize your public outreach campaign.

Section 14: Copy Editing and Proofreading

Copy editing and proofreading are related fields, although the terms are sometimes used interchangeably by people who don't know the difference. Copy editing is normally done before proofreading, which is the last step in the editorial process. The copy editor has the task of working directly with the content writers to improve the content of the copy and make sure it is correct in every way. Whereas the proofreader's job is to examine the copy for text and formatting errors before it goes to publication. The proofreader does not provide any advice or suggestions about the topic or contents of the text.

Copy Editing

Copy editing is done to improve the formatting, grammar, spelling, style, punctuation, and accuracy of the text in a document before it is inserted into the layout of a document or publication. In some cases, a copy editor may also do a rewrite or revision, if necessary to fix any problems with transitions, wordiness, terminology and jargon, timelines, semantics, and style to ensure the text has the impact desired. In addition, copy editors add any "display copy" such as headlines and standardized headers and footers.

Copy refers to written or typewritten text that is submitted for typesetting, printing, or publication.

In copy editing, it is important to remember the "five Cs" that summarize the copy editor's job. Make the copy:

1. clear,
2. correct,
3. concise,
4. comprehensible, and
5. consistent.

Copy editors are expected to ensure the text flows, that it is sensible, fair, and accurate, and that any legal problems have been addressed.

Here are several tips to assist you in finding errors in your copy, but remember the more eyes on the copy, the more likely all the errors will be caught and corrected. Ask at least two others to read your copy before sending it.

- Be aware of certain errors you tend to make and double-check for those.
- Read slowly or more importantly, read aloud. Read one word at a time. When you read aloud you will hear the words which will help in correcting errors.
- Take a break between writing and editing so that you don't read what you think is there.
- Review your text more than once – have someone else also review it.

Proofreading

When your marketing materials are nearly a completed product, meaning it has been edited, laid out, and designed, they then should be proofread. A proofreader looks for typographical errors. The proofreader works with a mockup of the finished product or a proof (hence the term proofreading). A proofreader's task is not to suggest major changes to the text, but to look for minor text and formatting errors and sign off that the material is ready for publication.

The quality of your publications and news releases has an impact on how professional and credible your club and Optimist International are perceived by the reader. The quality of your published materials will also help in them being picked up by the media. The copy you write should have extensive copy editing and proofreading before it is released.

Section 15: Public Relations and Graphic Design

The word design means to plan artistically and skillfully – and that is exactly what good graphic design does: It tells a story with images and visuals in a manner where the connection is made with the desired target audience(s).

Graphic design and public relations are often thought of as two separate disciplines, independent of each other. However, in the highly competitive marketing and public relations world, more and more we are coming to realize the two are connected and the crossover of these two disciplines is becoming increasingly more relevant as new communications platforms and channels change the way we communicate.

Incorporating graphic design into your plans is one of the smartest decisions you can make in crafting the Optimist International brand. The use of good design allows us the opportunity to craft the enthusiasm, passion, positivity, and expertise into print and digital materials that make our mission tangible to those we are trying to reach. For us to become truly competitive in the world we must embrace and take full advantage of traditional methods of communication and find more creative and strategic ways to transfer relevant information to our target audiences.

Design can make or break a public relations campaign. The goal of public relations is to make your club's and the Optimist International brand visible, identifiable, accessible, and eye-catching to our target audiences. In addition, it is about managing our reputation and conveying that message to the public with the appropriate design visuals and communication channels. To be successful public relations efforts must be straightforward in communicating our goals and other relevant campaign information to gain the public's trust.

When we speak about design, two basic underlying factors govern everything we do – aesthetics and function. Both factors are important in achieving good design. Design and text go hand in hand. A designer's objective is to convert our organization's campaign and communication strategies into an attractive system that works at every level – club, zone, district, and internationally. Remember, the primary purpose of public relations is to get information across clearly and effectively, in an interesting and engaging way that will draw in the public. Graphic design plays a key role in making this happen.

When approaching the visual and artistic side of design several basic rules need to be followed. Certainly, there are exceptions, but these rules are tried and true and are used to help provide focus, clarity, and consistency in the design process.

These rules are as follows:

- * *A clearly defined goal*
 - *Design is a communication process*
 - *Design with consistency*
 - *Use no more than two or three typefaces.*
 - *Establish a visual hierarchy*
 - *Color is a critical design tool*
 - *Keep your layouts clean and simple*
 - *Embrace white space*
 - *Be dynamic with your layouts*
 - *Know your brand voice and audience*
 - *Use imagery that's creative and tells a story, avoid clip art*
 - *Avoid current trends*
 - *Learn and take inspiration from others*

A Clearly Defined Goal

Clearly stated goals that define what the message will be are an essential part of achieving a successful design solution. Goals help the designer focus on the final product, how it fits into the overall public relations strategies, and the audience it is meant to attract. A pretty design with no clear message is meaningless and sometimes can do more damage than good.

Design is a Communication Process

If your public relations campaign is going to be successful, the design elements of your campaign must support the overall concept. The design must have an easily identifiable meaning. Images, whether realistic or abstract, carry a message and if that message doesn't support your concept it will muddy the waters and confuse your audience. This confusion can result in your audience doubting your message or in some cases missing it entirely, causing your integrity to be compromised.

Design with Consistency

Consistency is the backbone of a great design. Make sure your design complies with Optimist International's *Branding Guidelines*. This document provides basic standards governing the use of fonts, color, and layout to produce a consistent Optimist look. As your design develops, you must look at every component of the design and make sure each part works together. Failure to do so may weaken your design solution to the point where the whole message you are trying to convey is compromised.

Use No More than Two or Three Typefaces

Typography is word art. When doing a layout of an ad, brochure, flyer, webpage, etc. you are designing with type. The fonts you choose help tell the story.

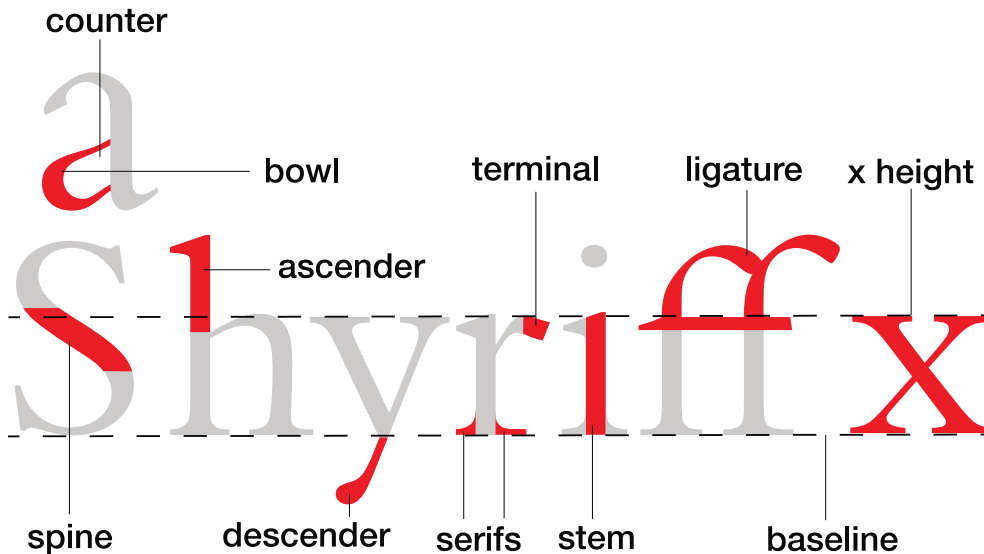
The first thing to remember is don't go crazy and use too many fonts. Carefully pick one or two, no more than three that work together setting the tone and mood you want to portray. Too many fonts will result in a visually cluttered and confusing layout.

Font selection should never be an arbitrary process. Think about what you want the typeface to do to give your design the impact it needs to entice and interest your audience(s). Simply looking through a font selection to find a typeface you like will rarely produce effective results.

Learning the basic principles of typography will help you become more aware of the characteristics of the typefaces you have at hand and will choose for your promotional and informational materials.

The graphics shown below explain the basic terms associated with a typeface. Though no one expects you to become an expert, familiarizing yourself with these terms will give you a better understanding of how to best use a particular font.

Typeface Terms



Typeface Terms

Counter – A counter is the area of a letter that is entirely or partially enclosed by a letter form or a symbol.

Bowl – The bowl is the curved part of a character that encloses the circular or curved parts (counter) of some letters such as **d**, **b**, **o**, **a**, and **B**.

Spine – The spine is the main left to right curving stroke in **S** and **s**. It may be almost vertical or mostly horizontal, depending on the typeface.

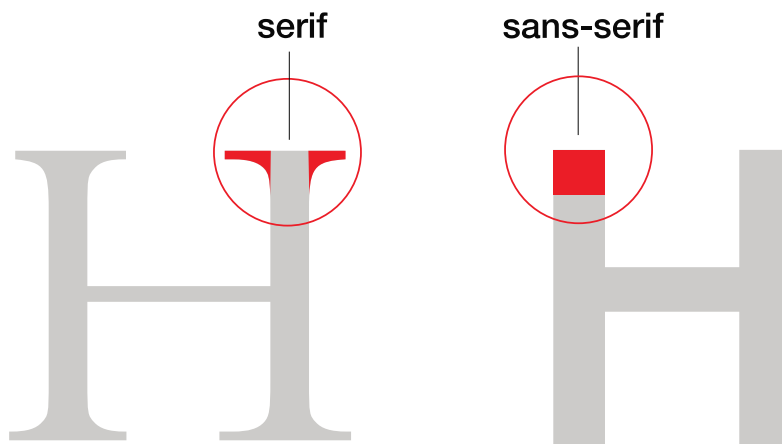
Ascender – The upward vertical stem or stroke on some lowercase letters, such as **h** and **b**, that extends above the x-height. The height of the ascenders is an identifying characteristic of many typefaces.

Descender – The portion of some lowercase letters, such as **a** and **y**, that extends or descends below the baseline is known as a descender. The length and shape of the descender are identifying characteristics of some fonts. Sometimes, depending on their length they can cause awkward and distracting patterns that can affect the readability of your text.

Serifs – A serif is a stroke added as a stop to the beginning and end of the main strokes of a typeface character.

Terminal – The terminal is the end of an instroke or outstroke of a letter. It is often a serif. A serifed terminal may be described as a wedge, bulbous, teardrop, slab, etc. depending on the design of the typeface. As shown in the examples below, typefaces are classified by their look, of which the weight and serif style – whether serif or sans-serif – are key features.

Serif Font or Sans-Serif Font



Stem – The stem is the main vertical stroke in upright letterforms. When a letter has no vertical strokes like a capital A or V, the first diagonal stroke is considered the stem.

Ligature – A font ligature occurs where multiple letterforms are joined to form a single unique character.

X Height – The x-height refers to the distance between the baseline and the top of the lowercase line in a typeface. Fonts with larger x-heights make your text more legible. Typically, text for the screen benefits from a larger x-height, whereas text on paper with its shorter reading distances will benefit from a lower one. This is not a hard rule, but something you should keep in mind.

Baseline – A baseline is an imaginary line where all typeface characters rest. Used correctly, fonts will reinforce your visual identity and strengthen the impact of your message, improving the quality of your club's promotional and informational materials.

Remember rules are simply meant as guidelines to assist you in creating an effective and attractive design. Sometimes you may need to break the rules. But you can only get away with it if you understand the rule and your decision is calculated and executed to achieve a specific goal.

Establish a Visual Hierarchy

In graphic design, it is important to visually rank the elements of the design to show their importance as well as the order you would like your audience to view them. You have a variety of tools to use, such as scale, contrast, balance, color, perspective, fonts, guides, grids, and texture to help establish each element of your design in its rightful place and ensure the most important elements will stand out.

You can build a visual hierarchy into your design by following these simple principles:

- ***Use size and scale to direct your audience's focus***

If you want to emphasize the importance of a component in your design the simplest way to do it is to use size and scale. By increasing the size or scale of an element in your design you can immediately attract a viewer's attention. However, caution should be used, enlarging too many elements may decrease their importance and detract from the other elements in the design.

- ***Employ color and contrast to make objects stand out***

Color is another simple, but highly effective way to emphasize an element's importance in a design. It is critical when it comes to the design process. When you consider color choose color palettes that interact well together. Bright colors grab the viewer's or reader's attention immediately. Whereas colors with a higher contrast appear heavier and closer to the viewer, again giving them a sense of importance. Colors should always complement each other and have a uniform flow. Using color to help your audience understand where you want them to go or what you want them to do provides them with a more pleasant experience and makes it easier for you to communicate with them.

- ***Experiment with perspective***

Perspective is one of the major visual design elements used by designers to indicate depth when working within a two-dimensional format such as print ads, brochures, websites, etc.

Depth is achieved by how you arrange the various elements in your design's layout. For instance, you can create the illusion of depth or perspective by increasing or decreasing the size of your design elements and the way you arrange them in your layout. Some elements will appear closer and others further away giving the design a sense of depth, perspective, and three dimensions.

Another way of achieving depth or perspective is the overlapping of objects. This approach is quite straightforward in that you simply place one object over another. The overlapping cues the viewer that the object on top is closer to him or her giving the illusion of depth and perspective.

- ***Understand the view patterns of your audience***

Each person has a subconscious viewing pattern they use when scanning the content of a page or screen. This pattern may vary for each person depending on the type of content they are viewing, but research has determined the two most prevalent viewing patterns people use are the **Z** pattern and the **F** pattern.

Z Pattern – The Z pattern follows a path from the top-left to the top-right, then down to the lower left, and across to the lower right.

This pattern is best used for content that is not text heavy. A design incorporating this flow pattern is focused on helping the viewer scan through each element shown quickly with an understanding of the importance of each component in the design.

F Pattern – The F pattern is used for viewing text-heavy designs, such as articles and blogs. In this pattern, viewers scan the page or screen from the top right, then down to the next line from left to right, and so on. This viewing pattern is the direction most of the western world reads. Just be aware that when designing your content for this flow pattern you should keep in mind that although your viewers may scan the full width of the first few lines, as they move further down the page, they will typically only scan the left portion of each row as they quickly move down the page until they discover something that catches their attention.

Both viewing patterns serve a unique purpose based on the type of content you are designing. Crafting your content to flow with these patterns will help viewers have a much better communication experience.

- ***Leveraging the use of fonts***

Choosing the right font or typeface for your design project can be a daunting task, due to the abundance of typefaces available to a designer. The right combination of typefaces will go a long way in giving your design its personality and grabbing the attention of your audience. Using fonts of different weights and sizes is a great way to increase hierarchy and highlight the more important text.

It is good practice to use different size headings in your design to give importance to the information associated with them. A good rule of thumb is that the main headline should be the boldest and most visible typeface, with lesser headings and text being reduced in size and weight to call out the less important areas of your design. This helps provide structure to your design and allows the readers to scan through the information to find the area that most interests them. The example below illustrates this principle.

Helvetica Neue Thin

Optimist are the best

Helvetica Neue Regular

Optimist are the best

Helvetica Neue Heavy

Optimist are the best

- ***Use whitespace and spacing to direct your audiences***

When you begin the design process you begin with a blank canvas. In the design world whitespace is a term used to describe the negative or blank space between the elements that make up your design. This whitespace, the space you leave blank, is just as important as the space you use for your design elements. One of the biggest mistakes people make when putting together

their promotional materials is cramming as many elements into their design's layout as they can to maximize the space. The result is a visually cluttered, distracting design that diminishes the impact of the message.

- ***Incorporate texture and tone***

Another excellent way to achieve hierarchy in your design layouts is to use texture and tone to direct your viewer's attention to a particular element or area of your design. Texture and tone are one of the building blocks of graphic design and involve the use of image texture (organic or geometric shapes and color) and pattern texture (manufactured patterns) to develop a perceived look and feel in a design layout.

Designers use these textures to create a visual tone for their designs to trigger a viewer's feelings, and emotions as well as excite the senses.

- ***Incorporate balance and symmetry***

Balance and symmetry in design matter as much as the visual impact or weight of the elements you use in your design. One can describe balance as the even distribution of space for all the components and elements making up your design. The goal is to have your design elements spaced in such a way that you maximize their visual impact and produce the best look.

The spacing of elements is known as balance and it refers to the arrangement of the components in a design's layout. Balance helps the designer achieve the best possible results with the maximum impact.

A twin to balance is symmetry. A good understanding of symmetry is crucial if you are to arrive at a successful design solution.

Symmetry is when the elements of your design are mirrored. For example, if you were to cut a symmetrical design in half the objects on both sides would be the same.

The line of symmetry does not always have to come through the center of your layout. As the designer, you decide where the symmetry line should be.

There are times you might choose to ignore the rules of balance and symmetry. The ability to do this successfully comes from experience, skill, and a thorough understanding of the rules. You have to understand them before you can break them.

- ***Alignment***

How text and graphics are placed and spaced on a page or screen in relation to each other is extremely important in achieving an effective and impactful design that enhances the visual experience and delivers the message the design project was intended to convey. Designers refer to this arrangement of text and graphics as alignment. Alignment is an arrangement of elements on a page or screen that forms a visual connection between the elements to fashion a message that can be easily understood.

The effective use of alignment in developing your designs will result in clear, professional projects that will attract and excite your target audience(s). It will also enable them to easily decipher your desired message by following a logical sequence.

Alignment involves two basic margin-dependent types of alignment – edge alignment and center alignment.

Edge alignment – Edge alignment is when the text or graphics are aligned at the edge of the page or screen. If the text or graphics are aligned to the left or right of the page this is called horizontal alignment. If they are aligned at the top or bottom of the page, this is called vertical alignment.

There are four types of horizontal text alignment

- **Center alignment** – The best use for this alignment is for headers, but it's not good for reading text.
- **Justifies alignment** – This type of alignment creates equal margins on both sides which work well for multiple text columns, but one drawback is that it tends to create unattractive gaps between words in the body text.
- **Left alignment** – This is the most common way to align text, which allows for a more coherent and memorable reading experience, especially when reading long paragraphs.

- **Right Alignment** – This way of aligning text is usually used for logo designs, short sentences, or languages that read from right to left.

Center alignment – Center alignment occurs when elements of a design are aligned on an imaginary central line of a page or screen. With this type of alignment all the text, graphics, and images are centered on the page or screen, but the edges are at different widths.

Here are a couple of tips for you to remember:

- Long text should not be center-aligned or right-aligned because it creates reading challenges.
- If the paragraphs in your design are left-aligned, make sure your headers are too.
- ***Make use of the principle of proximity***
The principle of proximity is simply the process of ensuring related design elements are placed together in your layout. Any unrelated elements should be spaced apart. Elements put in proximity to one another indicate to the viewer these items are related and form one visual unit, which helps give structure to your design's layout.
- ***Use guidelines and grids***
By incorporating guides and grids to structure your design you provide a pattern for your viewer to follow that helps them know where to go as their eyes move across the page or screen from one element to another.
- ***Use of movement***
Movement in graphic design refers to how the viewer's eyes move across a page or screen. Using movement ensures your targeted audience(s) will experience your design efforts the way you intended them to. With movement, you can guide the viewer's eyes in and out of a composition or to a specific element within the design's layout. You can show movement by using lines, shapes, and forms.

Color is a Critical Design Tool

Color is something so simple that we sometimes take it for granted. In graphic design, there are a few things more important than color. It is a powerful tool. A designer armed with his or her palettes of color can evoke reactions, emotions, and even action, all done without the use of words.

When we talk about color there are several terms that we hear quite often – hue, saturation, brightness, and value. These terms help us in describing the color palettes we choose to use.

The first term, **hue**, is the property of light by which the color of an object is classified as red, blue, green, or yellow in the color spectrum. A designer uses hue to describe both a color and a shade of color. For example, green is a hue, and turquoise is a hue of both green and blue.

The next term is **saturation**. Saturation describes the intensity of a color's hue from a gray with no saturation, to a pure vivid color with high saturation. High saturation colors are more colorful and intense, while those with low saturation give us colors that are muted or pastel.

The third term **value** refers to the lightness, brightness, or darkness of a color. A graphic designer uses value to help provide contrast to their design using shadows and highlights to separate objects in space as well as show their mass and contours, this, in turn, gives dimension to the design.

The fourth and last term we use to describe color is **brightness**. Brightness is simply a combination of both the hue of color and the value of color. It refers to the intensity of a color, distinguished by the amount of shading with hue. This is also known as luminance. A designer's ability to create cohesive color schemes relies on one key thing: their ability to know what colors go well together and complement each other. There are several ways for a designer to mix, match, and find the most appropriate color scheme.

The most common tool for color selection is the color wheel. The color wheel is one of the simplest, yet most powerful tools designers have at their disposal. It is a circle with different color sections used to show the relationship between colors.

A typical color wheel includes the blue, red, and yellow primary colors, and the corresponding secondary colors of green, orange, and violet or purple.

Designers also have access to several free-to-use color guide websites that give the ability to create graphic design color palettes. A listing of these is as follows:

COLOURlovers (www.colourlover.com) – this site is a creative community where designers from around the world create and share colors, palettes, patterns, and discuss the latest trends and explore colorful articles.

Color Hunt (www.colorhunt.co) – this site is an open collection of color palettes. It began as a personal small project built to share trendy color combinations between a group of designers, and over time the collection grew and now it is used daily as a resource by thousands of designers around the world.

Paletton (www.paletton.com) – formally known as Color Scheme Designer this site is a design tool for creating color combinations that work together well.

Keep in mind that although color is a very important tool for graphic design there are no set rules for the best colors or color combinations. Color is an adventure, so experiment and be creative with your color selections.

Keep Layouts Clean and Simple

One of the biggest mistakes people make when they design promotional materials is they over-design with too much content. They load the page or screen up with too many elements, which makes the layout and ultimate message confusing and harder for the viewer to see what's important. The most successful and impactful design solutions are usually clean and simple. Always remember the rule less is more.

Embrace White Space

In graphic design, white space is the negative space or blank space between each element of a design layout. Despite the name, white space does not have to be white. It can have any color, texture, or pattern. Good designers use it to give the elements of their design breathing room and create an emphasis on the key elements of their design.

Designers also use white space to create a visual hierarchy in their design layouts. This helps the viewer scan the design easily enabling them to identify its major focal points. Adding white space to your design increases the legibility and readability of your text and other important elements on the page or screen.

A graphic designer uses white space for the following purposes:

- To call attention to certain elements or areas of their design
- To guide the eye through the natural logical flow of a specific layout
- To increase the legibility of specific design elements
- To evoke a specific mood or tone in their design

The amount of white space you will use depends on the reaction you want from the viewer and what you would like to highlight in your design's layout. It's a delicate balancing act. On one hand, you want an adequate amount of white space to catch the viewer's eye and increase legibility, and on the other hand, you don't want to miss any important design elements that you feel need to be included in your design.

As you develop your promotional materials you should consider the following elements of white space in your designs.

Do you need passive or active white space?

Passive white space is space that is just there: it's the space between other elements of your design. This type of white space draws the eye and makes the primary elements of the design more legible without appearing to have an active impact on the overall design. On the other hand, active white space is a much larger segment of white space, specifically designed to draw the viewer's attention. It is often a larger white space within an otherwise active design, used to make a specific area or segment of the design stand out.

Use white space to help separate or group elements.

White space can be used to help show which elements in your design's layout go together. For example, you might use white space to highlight information about a specific club project or to call out information concerning a special event.

Use white space to create a look and tone for your design.

White space also allows you to generate a feeling of luxury or minimalism, depending on how you use it. In essence, you have the space, but you are choosing not to use it for unwanted content; instead, you allow your primary image to stand alone. Designs incorporating balanced white space are often associated with quality and luxury.

Use white space to establish a visual hierarchy.

As has been discussed earlier in this document, white space is an excellent tool to help a designer draw attention to specific areas or elements of a design layout and indicate to the viewer the overall visual importance of specific elements.

The bottom line

Using white space effectively will help you transform the tone of your design and direct the viewer's eye exactly where you want it to go. Whether you want a busy design, or a minimalistic one white space can help you capture the look you're you desire.

Be Dynamic With Your Layouts

The desire for symmetry is hidden deeply in the subconscious part of the human brain, which is why most viewers tend to prefer symmetrical design layouts over asymmetrical ones. Many companies looking to gain their customers' trust will often employ this design solution.

This is why most designers when preparing their layouts tend to favor a more balanced or symmetrical approach. Using balance and symmetry brings simplicity, stability, and organization to a design. Symmetrical designs also make it easier to recall information.

However, a designer also has the option of using the lack of balance and symmetry to convey the importance of certain elements. This is referred to as asymmetrical design. Creating an asymmetrical design takes place when there are two dissimilar sides within the design's layout. These types of designs have more fluidity and randomness. When taking this approach, a designer must determine how to randomly place the key elements in a layout, but still, be able to maintain a sense of spatial balance even though the elements are randomly placed and there is no symmetry.

Know Your Brand Voice and Audience

Our Brand Voice

Optimist International's brand voice is the unique way our organization communicates with all our audiences – our members, the public, corporations, businesses, and the media. It is how we convey our personality to not only our membership but the outside world.

Our brand voice defines the way we select the words we use, our attitude, and the core values we demonstrate while addressing our target audiences and others.

An organization like ours has distinctive characteristics just like a human being. Our brand voice helps our target audiences recognize our brand, in essence, our corporate personality, when we interact with them through various communication channels, such as telephone calls, written correspondence, emails, social media, and other communication sources. Optimist International's corporate personality has a specific vocabulary, set of values, and other characteristics which are conveyed by our brand voice when we interface with our audiences.

Our brand voice is how we communicate our core values, our brand identity, and our say in the volunteer marketplace.

For Optimist International to succeed in the volunteer marketplace it must be able to create and maintain a brand voice that is pleasant, appealing, and inspiring. We have to interact with the public and use easily understood vocabulary. Our position in the volunteer marketplace depends on how our audiences receive us and that is determined by their response to the message we deliver.

Our Target Audiences

For Optimist International to be successful in its outreach to the volunteer marketplace, we must know and understand our target audiences thoroughly. The challenge we face is we don't have just one audience; we have many and we must learn to speak to each of them in a language they understand. Our audiences include our membership, the public, corporations, foundations, the media, and educators just to name a few. Each needs a message designed just for them.

Another fact we must also realize and understand is that children are not our primary audience. Certainly, our major focus and service programs are children-centric, but the audience we must market to are the adults who raise and take care of those children and teach those children. If we are to succeed, we must learn to craft and tailor our messages for each specific audience, and this only comes from thorough research and the development of a meaningful strategy.

Every day our audiences are bombarded by messages and ideas which aid them in developing opinions and judgments about who we are and what our brand stands for. They must hear our brand voice loud and clear.

Use Imagery That's Creative and Tells a Story

In an age where everything is instant and attention spans are short, our public relations efforts must be impactful and eye-catching. As important as the words we use are, the use of a quality and interesting photograph can be the deciding factor in whether we can grab our target audience's attention.

Remember the old cliché, "a picture paints a thousand words". This has never been truer in public relations. Using quality images to tell your club's story or deliver a specific message is more likely to grab your audience as well as the media's attention. Photographs can add a whole new dimension to the story you are telling, giving it a wider appeal and impact. They are like a store window into your club and its activities; what this window reveals can either encourage or discourage an individual from investigating further.

In our increasingly fast-paced society photographs are magnets for target audiences because they generally are the primary feature of a design layout drawing people in to read your message. It is a known fact humans are visual beings. This trend is amplified by the explosion of social media. Photographs make a message or story come alive and add recall value to those individuals who do not have time to read the full message. It is important to remember readers love seeing images that bring your brand message to life.

When preparing a design, press release, or any other document for publication be very selective when deciding on the images to support the written text. Using low-quality photographs can many times do more harm than good, even acting as a deterrent for

publication. For this reason, when having someone take photographs make sure they understand the message you want to convey and have some basic understanding of how to take a good photograph. If it is possible to obtain a professional photographer do so. They will provide you with creative ideas and help you make the Optimist brand stand out from the crowd by delivering a strong focused message. Remember images that are to be printed should have a resolution of at least 300dpi to prevent them from becoming pixelated and appearing out of focus.

One final reminder. When preparing a design remember the text and images are collaborative partners, they go hand in hand. Featuring a great image without well-written text or vice versa diminishes the story or message.

Avoid Current Trends

When you begin developing your promotional campaign be careful not to get caught up in the popularity of current trends. The world is a fiercely competitive place, even in the volunteer service areas, and your promotional materials will be competing with everyone else who is attempting to do the same thing. You don't want your efforts to get lost in the crowd. The major problem is that trends are usually short-lived, and a trendy design can be outdated quickly. Your goal should be longevity. So, stick with designs that are classic and timeless and will allow you to maximize their use.

Learn and Take Inspiration from Others

There is no reason to reinvent the wheel. There is an abundance of resources available online, in bookstores as well as assistance from Optimist International to inspire and help you in your public relations and marketing efforts. Use these resources to strengthen and enhance our great organization's brand voice in the communities you serve and across the world.

Section 16: Handling Unfavorable Publicity

By the nature of our mission, Optimist Clubs are constantly in the public eye, and sometimes things can go wrong that may put your club in a bad light. Unfortunately, these situations are often considered to be newsworthy in the eyes of the public. For example, what if a child is injured during a club-sponsored youth event? Depending on the severity of the injury and the circumstances under which it happened it could be seen as news. You should always be prepared. If not handled properly the resulting publicity could be damaging to the youth event as well as the club's standing in the community. This can be avoided if you keep a cool head and give all the facts to the news media as timely and accurately as you can.

The best way to head off a bad story and lessen its impact is to deal with it immediately. Below are a few tips to assist you in dealing with such situations:

- First, never ask the media to suppress a story or avoid talking to the media. Have your club's spokesperson well versed in the details of what happened and how the club is responding. Keep in mind that the media will report the story because it's news.
- Second, take the time to assist the media in getting all the facts to make sure the story will be fair and balanced. Make sure the facts and information you give out are correct – never speculate or provide conjecture just to provide the media with information.
- Third, never speak before you have all the facts, make excuses, or place the blame elsewhere when you share the blame in the incident. Make sure you are seen as putting the public's interest first, be straightforward, honest, and cooperate with the media.
- Take the time to assess what happened and make sure you improve your crisis communications plan in case something negative happens in the future.

There is only one aspect you should refuse to discuss no matter what. If the story involves a personal injury and a question arises as to whether your club was negligent or at fault, notify Optimist International immediately. Optimist International's general liability insurance program protects your club and its members from legal liability judgments claiming negligence. Leave the question of fault to our legal experts.

If properly handled a negative incident can many times be turned into a public relations asset based on how your club responded. Being open, timely, and accurate in providing information to the media goes a long way in generating goodwill and leading to a closer working relationship with these organizations in the future. For more information about Optimist International's general liability insurance or how to respond and navigate these types of situations, please call 1-800-500-8130.

Section 17: Media Kit



Mission, Vision, and Purpose

Mission

By providing hope and positive vision, Optimists bring out the best in youth, our communities, and ourselves.

Vision

Optimist International will be recognized worldwide as the premier volunteer organization that values all children and helps them develop to their full potential.

Purposes of an Optimist Club

- To develop optimism as a philosophy of life using the tenets of the Optimist Creed;
- To promote an active interest in good government and civic affairs;
- To inspire respect for the law;
- To promote patriotism and work for international accord and friendship among all people;
- To aid and encourage the development of youth, in the belief that the giving of oneself in service to others will advance the well-being of humankind, community life and the world.



Fact about Optimist International

Optimist International

Headquarters: St. Louis, Mo

Founded: 1919

Major Programs

- **Optimist International Junior Golf Program:** Optimist International Junior Golf Championships is an exciting and unique golf program for ages 10-18.
- **Tournament of Champions:** An invitational event featuring the top finishers of the Optimist Championships, District qualifiers, and other top junior golf events.
- **Childhood Health and Wellness:** Initiated to improve the quality of life for children in their communities across a broad spectrum of needs. The program includes four areas of concentration (but are limited to the examples listed below):
 - **Healthy Lifestyles** (*Child Obesity, Healthy Eating, Physical Fitness, Happy Heart Advice, March of Dimes*)
 - **Chronic Diseases** (*Childhood Cancer, Juvenile Diabetes, HIV, Multiple Sclerosis, Muscular Dystrophy, Sickle Cell Anemia*)
 - **Mental Health** (*Depression, Bullying, Abuse*)
 - **Disabilities** – *Physical, Intellectual & Developmental (Autism, Special Olympics)*

- **Oratorical World Championships:** International level of the Oratorical Contest. Participants compete for a \$22,500 scholarship.
- **Scholarship Contests:** Optimist International sponsors three scholarship contests for students to earn funds to pursue opportunities, in higher education:
 - *Communications Contest for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (CCDHH)*
 - *Essay Contest*
 - *Oratorical Contest*

These contests are conducted at the Club level, Zone and Regional Level (if necessary), and District level.

- **Optimist In Action Month:** During the month of May, Optimist Clubs are encouraged to create a widespread spirit of unity bringing together Optimist Members and other community volunteers for a variety of local activities, fundraisers, and events.

Scope of Service

- Optimists conduct some 65,000 youth service projects each year serving over six million young people.
- Optimists raise and
- To inspire respect for the law;
- To promote patriotism and work for international accord and friendship among all people;
- To aid and encourage the development of youth, in the belief that the giving of oneself in service to others will advance the well-being of humankind, community life and the world.



International Optimist Day

What is Optimist Day:

Optimist Day is celebrated throughout the world annually on the First Thursday of February. This is a day where the world can be an Optimist themselves in action, plus join us in honoring Optimist Clubs and Members in their communities and worldwide for all they do year-round to promote efforts in bringing out the best in youth, our communities, and ourselves.

Optimist International Clubs and Members celebrate Optimist Day to promote their efforts and bring awareness to their community on how they are making a difference in the youth. They do this by wearing something with the Optimist logo and/or hosting events to celebrate the annual day. Optimist Clubs may choose a location and distribute copies of the Optimist Creed so others may choose optimism for themselves.

How Communities Celebrate Optimist Day:

In addition to our Clubs and Members celebrating Optimist Day, many local governments routinely issue Proclamations in honor of Optimist Day so that their communities can look to the future with hope. On Optimist Day, they can celebrate the volunteers who share their enthusiasm, skills, and talent to make tomorrow a vibrant and peaceful one.

How can you honor and celebrate Optimist Day:

Anyone can celebrate Optimist Day by volunteering in the community, teaming up with their local Optimist Club, doing something that brings out optimism in themselves or others, and by awareness about Optimist Day and the Optimist International Organization to friends and loved ones on Optimist Day.

How can you support Optimist Day and Optimist International's efforts:

This year Optimist International will have Optimist Day gear, apparel, and memorabilia for you to display to help us spread awareness of Optimist International. Please only buy Optimist Day merchandise through us and our online licensed merchant store

Optimist International Official Suppliers:

- United States and the Caribbean: Shumsky - www.OptimistStuff.com
- Canada: Ansell's Awards and Specialties: www.optimistsupply.ca

The History of Optimist Day

Early in 2013, Sylvain Levesque, a member of the National Assembly of Quebec and of the Optimist Club of Lorretteville, introduced the resolution to recognize Optimist Day in Quebec. Later that year at the Optimist International Convention, delegates in Cincinnati passed a resolution adopting the first Thursday of every February as Optimist Day. The date corresponded with Optimist Day in Quebec. At the time, Levesque was a member of the Optimist Club of Duberger and was asked by fellow Optimist Michel Lamothe to consider introducing the resolution. Levesque agreed, and the resolution unanimously passed.

When asked why the first Thursday in February was selected, Levesque said that it was because we normally start our work at the National Assembly in the 1st week of February and we could pass the resolution at that moment.

Regardless of the reason, Optimists throughout the world are thankful to him for taking the initiative to present the resolution, and they continue to celebrate Optimist Day on the first Thursday of February each year.

Optimist Day Flyers, PR, and Proclamations.

Section 18: Annex