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SECTION 7 - Marketing and Promotion

1. *Marketing Ourselves*

Why do we need to continually promote Read Write Now?

In today's world there seems to be ever increasing competition for resources amongst community-based organisations such as ours. Just about every organisation needs more funding and more volunteers if their good work is to continue.

It is a reality that the higher our marketing profile is, the more secure our funding becomes. A strong marketing profile also makes an organisation attractive to prospective volunteers. The cliché 'everyone wants to back a winner' is true and volunteer organisations with a good professional image have greater appeal to people wanting to volunteer their time. Of course, good marketing also gets the message out through the community so that potential students hear about our service.

It is also an important part of our marketing to tackle the sense of shame that surrounds illiteracy. We aim to generate the positive message that most reading difficulty results from denied or lost opportunities in childhood and is no reflection on intelligence. We always promote: **'It's never too late to learn.'**

In summary, ongoing promotion is vital to:

1. Secure funding.
2. Attract volunteers.
3. Attract students.
4. Remove the shame attached to illiteracy.

2. Possible Promotional Opportunities

With a limited budget, what are the options for us?

There are a number of possible promotional opportunities to stimulate the marketing and promotion of the program at a local level. The list supplied is by no means compulsory or exhaustive and there's always plenty of space to add on your own ideas. If those ideas are successful, write them down (so you can use them again) and remember to share them with others. All promotions need to follow the *Read Write Now!* guidelines:

- Remember to use the logo.
- Keep the message consistent and positive.
- Keep Central Office informed.
- Send in any newspaper cuttings for our folio (always useful for funding statistics).

Radio – Information radio, Community Service Announcements on mainstream radio, Ethnic radio (eg, 6EBA), Sunshine FM, talkback radio/interviews.

Newspaper/newsletter/magazine articles – *The West Australian, The Sunday Times, Community News* (check independent papers in your area also). Magazines such as those produced by banks and some local councils, union newsletters to staff/employers. *Have-A-Go* seniors' paper, ethnic newspapers, Lions Bulletins, Local MP's letter to residents, Agriculture Department's *Rural Link, Farmers Weekly*. A follow-up 'Letter to the Editor' thanking the paper for support is additional exposure. NB: any approaches to the major newspapers should be done in conjunction with Central Office.

Paid Advertisements – Paid advertisements are organised and booked through Central Office. Examples of advertisements can be emailed to you, and you can add or delete information to make it more 'local' to your region. For example, a local phone number may be added for interested people to ring. Central Office books the advertisement because it is eligible for a cheaper government rate. If your region requires more tutors or students and you would like to have an advertisement appear in the paper, contact Central Office.

Advertisements must acknowledge that the program is funded by the West Australian Department of Education and Training.

Sample Advertisement

Help an Adult to Read

There is great satisfaction in helping someone to read a newspaper, find work or fill in forms. Sometimes parents need help to read to their children. Sometimes adult students need help to understand course materials.

Volunteer tutors work with adults who find it difficult to read or write, or who are learning to speak English. Tutoring is free and is on a one-to-one basis.

Read Write Now! is desperately short of tutors in the South East metro area – Beckenham, Maddington, Thornlie, Gosnells, Westfield, Kenwick, Huntingdale, Southern River, etc.

Free training provides skills and strategies for working with adult students.

Next Training Course – mid October 2008

To join us, as a tutor ring on freecall **1800 018 802.**

Read-Write-Now!
Free Tutoring for Adults
Funded by the Western Australian Department of Education and Training

Information Directories – Local Council information directories/web page.

Printed Materials – Tutor brochures, student brochures, posters, letterhead, envelopes, and business cards.

Display Noticeboards – In colleges (staff rooms and student areas), doctors surgeries, shopping centres. Tutors and friends workplaces, Centrelink, Red Rooster, McDonalds, libraries etc. Obtain permission before placing posters.

Guest Speaker – If you or one of your committee members feel confident, offer to speak at Colleges, professional forums, Probus, Lions groups, Rotary, UW3 (University of the Third Age). A history of the program can be obtained from Central Office.

Displays/Promotions – Shopping centres, country agricultural shows, college open days, adult learners week, libraries.

TAFE Colleges – College Open Days, websites, Orientation day, information in the staff induction package on where to contact you and what you can do for students, in the diary.

Other – Portable displays, plus Read Write Now! notepads, pens, balloons are available for use.

3. Media Releases

A media release may be sent to print media, television and/or radio stations. All media releases written by Coordinators or committee members need to be sent first to Central Office for review. A media release is an excellent way to get information to the right people quickly but it should never be viewed as a foolproof method of getting information published.

Remember that media outlets receive hundreds of these daily so yours has to catch the eye. Each media outlet has different priorities, so... **where does your story fit?**

The local newspaper

- Main priority: to fill spaces between the ads
- Easy because they need copy to put between the ads
- Often they will run the story exactly the way you write it
- Generally they will want to send their own photographer, however if this is not possible, check whether you can send in a good quality photo yourself
- More relaxed because often weekly or bi-weekly deadline
- Most unlikely to have a specialist reporter

The major daily and weekend newspapers

- Main priority: quality, entertaining stories
- Competitive – they will receive hundreds of faxed releases every day and run just 20-odd stories
- Generally will not print a supplied photograph (unless it's highly specialised)
- Will not print a media release – will want their own reporter to talk to you
- Operate to strict deadlines
- Might have a specialist reporter, and hence take more complex stories

Radio

- Main priority: talent that can talk interestingly and colourfully
- Immediate connection between interviewee and audience often with no editing
- Relies less on substance and more on manner than the newspapers
- No hard copy to keep as record
- Better used as a back-up to a major story, or to get run for a minor story or one that disappeared without a trace
- Do not use to break a big story

4. The Basics of Writing a Good Media Release

Layout

- Should have a wide margin so journalist can add own notes

Headline

- Must catch reader's interest – support with **Bold Type**

Formula to follow

- Write all of your message in the first sentence, or at most the first paragraph (remember stories get cut from the bottom as advertising space sells)
- Second paragraph should have a quote from a relevant person
- Maximum length 3 or 4 paragraphs
- Each paragraph to have between 2 and 4 sentences
- Use short sentences
- Quantify your information eg: 3,000 people, half the population, worth \$10m
- Limit the concepts, stick to one main message, keep it simple
- State facts not opinions
- Aim at a reading age of 12 years
- Writing from the perspective of a third party has more credibility than 'blowing your own trumpet'

How to get your media release printed

- Build a relationship with your local editor/journalist
- Phone first to tell them about your story
- Send media release
- Phone again to be sure they have received it and kept it
- After it has been in the paper, phone again to thank them
- Phone the editor to praise the journalist who covered your story or to give feedback on the results

Timing of sending media releases

- Find out the deadline for your newspaper and send in your media release early, but not too early
- For major daily papers and radio – NEVER on a Friday

If things go wrong with an article, basically write it off to experience. If you make a fuss and get journalists offside, they won't come back next time you need them.

6. Information to Include when Talking to Community Groups

General Information about Read Write Now!

- State-wide Community based service with its Central Office at Central TAFE.
- Has been operating since 1977.
- Tutoring adults (18+) in Literacy and basic Numeracy.
- Volunteer workforce - 700 state-wide.
- Groups – Country and Metropolitan (24 groups state-wide).
- Students vary in numbers between 500 – 800 and come from all walks of life - business people; unemployed people; TAFE students needing help with courses; some needing additional skills for a promotion; parents who want to read to their children, assist with their homework or correspond with the school; some are learning English for the first time and some may have an intellectual disability.
- Tutors are from the community, people who wish to help others to improve their basic literacy and/or numeracy skills.
- Full training given to tutors – TAFE accredited Certificate in Tutoring an Individual Adult in Literacy and Numeracy.
- RWN! applies for Police Check on behalf of tutor at RWN's expense.
- Students and tutors are matched and together they discuss the student's goals and set a program to achieve them.
- Regular contact is kept with tutors via Newsletters, Workshops, Tutor meetings and phone calls.
- Students are encouraged to contribute to the *Read Write Now!* publication – “Write On”.
- Resources and help with students and ideas in tutoring are available from group Coordinators.
- Non-literacy volunteers with skills such as bookkeeping, publicity, database management etc. assist Coordinators.

Group Specific Information – some ideas...

- Groups occasionally have displays in shopping centres in the area to raise public awareness and to attract tutors and students to the Program.
- The _____ group has ____ Coordinator(s) and a team of ____ members who are available by phone should problems arise.
- The _____ group receives support from _____ (local council, Learning Centre, library etc) for office space/tutoring rooms/resources etc.
- Our group began with ____ student(s) and ____ tutor(s) and has now grown to ____ and _____.

7. Marketing Operational Plan of Activities

Developing a promotional plan for your region

All regions within the *Read Write Now!* Program are asked to work with Central Office to complete a statewide marketing plan. Each region is requested to complete the form supplied with details of planned activities. This is an excellent way to share promotional ideas between the regions and for Central Office to have an overview of what is happening in the state. Below is a list of some of those ideas:

- Identify the options for promotion that are available in your region. Refer to ‘Possible Promotional Opportunities’ near the beginning of this Section.
- Plan a calendar of promotions spread over the year. Consider planned tutor training dates, school holidays, your own commitments.
- Identify who are the different groups in your target audience and the promotion most appropriate for them. Is there a large ESL population in your area who are unlikely to read the local newspaper?
- Identify costs involved. Ensure you receive quotes and stick to your budget.
- Identify who will help you. Your own committee, tutors, Central Office, other external groups. Perhaps your committee could have one person whose sole responsibility is the promotion of *Read Write Now!* in your area.
- How will you gauge if it has been a successful promotion? Inquire and record how each inquiry heard of you and *Read Write Now!* and keep all news clippings and copies of advertisements that have been placed.

Marketing Operational Plan of Activities

April 200_ to March 200_

Key

1. Public Awareness
2. Increased participation
3. Improved resources

Group _____

MONTH	ACTIVITY	BUDGET	ACTION/OUTPUT	OBJECTIVE	RESPONSIBILITY