



## MARKETING FOR MEMBERSHIP

By: The Social Excellence Project

There's a lot to say about marketing for membership organizations, but here are four marketing insights that many membership-based groups find to be helpful.

**Know Your Audience:** This is the oldest axiom of marketing for a reason. For many organizations, the first thing they forget to do when they put together a marketing effort is to consider what the audience actually cares about. Instead, many cause-oriented organizations design marketing efforts that make them feel good about themselves. Intelligent market research combined with a disciplined approach to storytelling that puts the potential member - the buyer - in the center of the marketing campaign is vital for organizational growth.

**Heart Not Head:** For many people, the choice to join a membership organization is a decision that is made with their heart, not their head. It is an emotional choice made out of a desire to belong, a longing to matter, and an affinity for the people in the group. Yet, many organizations fill their marketing efforts with bullet points, facts, and stats in an effort to convince people through logic. Good information is fine, but great marketing is emotional. Great organizational growth marketing is a conversation not an essay. It's Social Excellence on a larger scale. It is an expression and exchange of values. It is a heart to heart exchange of beliefs. A nod of deep understanding and an affirmation of mutual worth. Heart, not head.

**Be Remarkable:** Is your organization worthy of remarking upon? That's what it means to be remarkable. Is your group predictable, expected, or boring to non-members? Great marketing focuses in on a single, powerful, compelling story - a core marketing narrative. What is your organization about? Is your group structured in such a way that it provides easy-to-access and significant value in the lives of the people you most want to attract? Too many organizations have grown unremarkable over time. They've become comfortable, predictable, and stale. Be about something. Be remarkable.

**Make It Personal:** Growth-focused marketing for membership organizations should always result in one very clear objective -- it should make it easier for more people to have real interpersonal interactions with your best members. All marketing, whether it's social media, billboards, magazines, events, sponsorships, promotional items, advertising, brochures, blimps, smoke signals, or sidewalk chalk... All marketing for membership organization growth should create real human-to-human connection opportunities. People join people. Make it personal.

