



District A4

Club Public Relations & Promotions Guide

You may have heard the phrase, **“we are the worlds best kept secret.”** By not publicizing our efforts, it becomes increasingly difficult to have a positive impact in the community. To turn this around we must maximize our publicity efforts to **“get the message out”** and show the community what we do on every club activity to demonstrate that we are making a difference and what effect Lions has had on the community. This in turn fosters greater community support, increases the opportunities for recruiting new members and revitalize clubs.

Another method of promotion that we often forget is communicating with our own members, hence **“we have become our own best kept secret.”** Communicating with all club members regarding club activities is extremely important to ensure continued membership participation.

This guide offers practical ideas to promote your club. If you would like to invite a member of the Public Relations & Promotions team to visit your club, please feel free to contact any one of us. We are here to help you to reshape public opinion and improve your club’s visibility so that club activities become a success.

For ideas to revitalize your club, recruit new members or deal with challenges your club is experiencing, please refer to the [District A4 Club Revitalization and New Member Recruiting Guide](#).

Additional publicity resources are available by going to the MD“A” Lions Resource Centre website at resources.mdalions.org and clicking on “Public Relations.”

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A Few Ideas to Promote Your Club in the Community

Why not [Create a Club Facebook Page](#)? People of all ages are on Facebook these days and the numbers are growing exponentially. Did you know that 1.65 billion items are posted on Facebook every year? Facebook is a very powerful medium to promote your club. Take lots of photographs and videos of “Lions in action” at events and write up a few sentences answering the questions Who, What, When, Where and Why and post on your club’s Facebook page.

If you're looking for a free and easy way to [Create a Club Website](#), then e-Clubhouse is for you! LCI has provided this resource to help clubs build a useful, professional looking website. Designed with fill-in-the blank fields for even the least Internet savvy, the e-Clubhouse allows you to build and maintain a club website using tools that make it easy to keep your members and community up-to-date on club projects, promote club activities and recruit new members.

[Why Use Social Media](#)? Popular social media channels, such as Facebook and Twitter, allow Lions to share and connect with their communities and fellow Lions around the world. More and more Lions are using social media to make a bigger impact by following and connecting with other community organizations, leaders and the general public to spread the word about their club, sharing photos and videos of their recent activities to show the world how they’re serving the community, keeping current members updated and informed about upcoming projects, meetings and events and attracting new and young members.

[Making Use of Lions Videos in our Public Relations Efforts](#) is a powerful method to help us prove to the world what Lions achieve in our community and around the globe. Whether it’s your own video or a video from LCI, you can take advantage of them by using them in your club or copying the link of a particular video to place on your website or Facebook page, or send to a community television channel such as Rogers or Cogeco or a radio station to broadcast it.

[Club Brochures, Bulletins and Posters](#) are an effective tool to promote your club. They should look professional, be brightly coloured to stand out, contain lots of colourful photographs with “Lions in action”, be left out in public venues with lots of traffic, include contact information so people can follow-up with you, perhaps a potential new member, and be sent to club members to keep them up to date on club activities.

When talking to the media and others in your community about your Lions club and Lions Clubs International, it is helpful to know what [Key Lions Messages](#) you want to get across. Review the Key Lions Messages and Questions prior to interviews, activities where the media might be present and visits to other organizations and schools.

[Having a Lions Information Booth at Club Events](#) is an effective method to promote your club and increase membership. The booth should be staffed by experienced, cheerful, confident, knowledgeable and well-spoken Lions to discuss club activities and the great things Lions achieve in the community and around the world.

A service project idea to consider is the [Lions Day of Service](#) where clubs in the district all complete a service project on the same day to make a large collective impact. Clubs in Districts A12 and A16 participate in the Lions Day of Service and along with District officers. Perhaps all Districts in MDA could host a Lions Day of Service, synchronizing them all to the same day for an even greater collective impact.

Placing an [Annual Fundraising Poster](#) in your hall highlighting where your club made donations over the last year and send it to the newspaper as well. Don’t forget to include a total amount at the bottom. You could also include a list of organizations your club donated the use of your hall to. A club in the district recently had such a poster in the local newspaper highlighting that their club had raised \$62,000 in the last year. This had the positive effect of changing the town council’s impression from not knowing what their club did in the community to the mayor joining their Lions club. Past International President Judge Brian Stevenson suggested this at a recent District A4 Convention.

The [Lions Club and Community Needs Assessment](#) provides feedback from community leaders with what they see as important needs in the community. They could become projects your club could do to provide greater relevance to the community and club members. Clubs working on relevant community projects create excellent public relations and greater community support. When people see your club working on projects relevant to the community, they want to become involved. After all, it's human nature to be part of something important.

Traditionally, prospective members were invited to three meetings before they were asked to become a Lion. A more effective technique is to [Invite People to Club Service Projects](#). If someone visits a Lions booth or you are talking with a member of the public and they are interested to learn what Lions is all about, invite them to participate in a service project. Personally participating in a service project allows them to experience "Lions in action" and you get to see them as a potential Lion. Don't forget to get their contact information. After they have participated in a few service projects, this might be an appropriate occasion to invite them to become a Lion. If they are invited to a service project and they indicate they are not able to attend, don't let the door of opportunity close. Invite them to the next service project.

[Conducting an Open House to Recruit New Members](#) is an effective recruiting method, where a well spoken, energetic and inspiring Lion can speak with prospective members about the great things Lions achieve.

[Is Your Club Keeping its Service a Secret?](#) The 30 Marketing Ideas brochure provides effective ideas to promote your club in your community. We need to "get the message out" about the great things we do. Select one category a month and implement an activity within the category to unlock yourselves to the community and share your Lions pride. The payoff is greater public awareness and community support.

LCI has a collection of [Public Service Announcements](#) (PSAs) covering many topics that are available at no cost, including broadcast quality PSAs in MPEG format for television stations. When writing a PSA, brevity and clarity is important since you have only 10 to 30 seconds to communicate your message to get the listeners' attention, show how they will benefit from doing what you suggest and tell them where to go, what to do, when to do it and where to call for more information. Contact the news or public service director at your local television or radio station to learn the station's scheduling and format requirements and if they can assist you with production. Often stations have a reduced rate for not-for-profit organizations.

[Public Access Television](#) such as Rogers and Cogeco air PSAs and videos of club activities, post club events on community bulletin boards and have members participate in community talk shows. Contact the public service director at your local cable station for opportunities.

We often forget to [Keep Members Up-To-Date on Club Activities](#). Communicating with all members regarding club activities is extremely important to ensure continued membership participation. Sending out meeting agendas, minutes, bulletins and posters are effective for keeping the lines of communication open to all members.

Many clubs work well with their [Community Newspapers](#) promoting club's activities. For every activity, take photographs of "Lions in action" and write up a few sentences answering the questions Who, What, When, Where and Why and email it to the newspaper. With this method, it costs the newspaper nothing and you are making them aware of what your club is doing to make a difference in the community.

When you are talking with someone, the first impression is always important, so why not be prepared for the "30 second elevator speech" by [Becoming a Confident Word-of-Mouth Lion Ambassador?](#)

Does your club have a [Marketing Communications Chairperson](#)? As the [Marketing Communications Chairperson](#), you will play a lead role within your club. Using social media, you will be able to motivate and excite new and existing members. Ways you can do this are by publicizing club activities, growing your club's outreach and assisting the club president in communicating with club members.

[Creating a Club YouTube Channel](#) is another very powerful medium to promote your club by posting videos of club activities. Did you know that 400 hours of YouTube videos are viewed every minute? Similar to a Facebook page, for club activities, take videos of “Lions in action” and write up a few sentences answering the questions Who, What, When, Where and Why and post on your club’s YouTube channel.

[Club Fact Sheets](#) will provide background information about your club to reporters. Include a fact sheet with all press releases. You can also use fact sheets as handouts during community events.

[Post-Event Publicity](#) is extremely important and you can report the results of your programs and fundraisers to the community through press releases, letters to the editor and display advertisements.

[Press Releases](#) provide more media coverage for your club. A press release is a fast, effective and inexpensive way to get more attention for your club’s service projects, fundraising events and success stories. It’s also a great way to attract new members who want to be part of the great work you do. Lions Club International has made it easy to spread the word about your club by providing [Sample Press Releases](#) on membership, service projects, recognition, Leo clubs and special events that can be quickly and easily customized to include your club’s news and events. Want to create your own press release? Simply download a blank press release template and add information on your special activity or event. Make sure you include contact information in the press release and post it to your club website and Facebook page.

When doing **Interviews and Public Speaking**, an appropriate club spokesperson should be prepared to provide accurate information with enthusiasm and confidence. Here are some tips for successful interviews:

Know Your Facts - Be ready to expand upon Who, What, When, Where, Why and How stated in media material.

Prepare Key Message Points - Rather than answer a question with a simple "yes" or "no," use the interviewer's question as a bridge to your key messages. Practice answering likely questions prior to the interview. Review the [Key Lions Messages](#) and adapt them to fit your club's messages.

Give Short, Clear Responses - Mention your main points early in the interview in a few, brief, clear sentences. If you do not know the answer to a question, offer to find out the answer and follow up immediately.

Mention Your Club's Name Often - Avoid saying only "I" or "we."

Watch What You Say - Never give "off the record" comments.

Dress Appropriately - Always wear your Lions pin. For television, avoid pinstripes, white shirts, loud prints and too much jewelry.

Smile - Be conversational. Let the reporter see that you enjoy being a Lion.

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