

# Extension Marketing: Budgets and Evaluation<sup>1</sup>

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This EDIS publication, focusing on budgets and evaluation, is the fifth of a five-part EDIS publications series on developing marketing campaigns for your local Cooperative Extension program. This series includes publications on campaign planning and audience analysis development, integrated marketing, and creative and media strategies. [Click here](#) to navigate the series.

## Budgets

The driving force behind any marketing communications campaign is money. Probably one of the first things to consider in developing your marketing strategy is how much money you have to spend. What is your **budget**? You can spend a lot or a little, and depending on how creative you are, you can stretch your budget dollars a lot by establishing good collaborative partners and identifying prime locations to communicate your message.

**Partnerships**, or sponsorships, can be one of the most effective ways to send messages without incurring excessive costs. Potential partners could include local media, companies, or organizations with similar interests. Considering nutrition, you may be able to do an educational program at a local health and fitness center and utilize its built-in advertising efforts. For a program on hurricane preparedness, you may be able to partner with a home supply store that will show some of the tools or products you discuss. The store could buy advertising or provide displays in their store about your educational program.

You can also engage in media relations such as community calendars in newspapers, on television, on radio, and on the Internet. Word of mouth to opinion leaders is another effective and inexpensive method of spreading a message. If you plan to contact a news outlet (TV or radio station or newspaper), here are some things to consider:

- **Explain your need personally**, especially if you need a good deal of exposure in a short time. However, remember that you are asking for free time. Any time that is given to you is better than no time at all.
- **Send information about your event to a newspaper or television or radio station's public relations person, public affairs director, or promotions director** (after you have made personal contact with that person, of course). Many stations have a calendar of events, which is aired once a day. Chances of your event running in a calendar of events are greater if you send your event information to a smaller station or newspaper. Large-market stations and newspapers will publicize the event if it will impact large numbers of people.
- **Be ready to go on the air early**. Many TV and radio stations invite guests to discuss their upcoming events. However, these interviews usually are early in the day. Be ready and willing to appear during early morning hours if you are asked.

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## Evaluation

One of the most important parts of a campaign is evaluation. **Evaluation** allows someone to determine whether or not the marketing communications campaign is successful. Marketing practitioners must determine whether or not the target audience understands the message and if they can recognize and recall the message. The practitioner must also determine where the brand stands in the minds of the audience and whether or not the audience will buy the product or service.

Simple methods of evaluation include distributing surveys, comparing attendance or participation numbers, and recording the number of times people inquire about the product, program, or service. The results of these evaluation methods can help generate performance reviews, gauge success, modify marketing strategies, or develop new or different approaches.

Evaluation must also consider both tangibles and intangibles. **Tangible evaluation** involves assessing quantifiable statistics, such as the number of people who see the message or the number of inquiries you receive. So success could be measured by the number of people who attended the Extension program. **Intangible evaluation** measures unquantifiable data such as public awareness and perceptions. An example of intangible evaluation is people's perceptions of Extension following their participation in your local Extension program.

## Quick Reference Guide

### Budget

#### *Budget Considerations*

- Stretch dollars by establishing good collaborative partners and identifying prime locations to communicate messages.

#### *Partnerships*

- Local media
- Companies
- Organizations with similar interests

#### *News Outlets*

- Explain your need personally.

- Send information about your event to a newspaper or television or radio station's public relations person, public affairs director, or promotions director.
- Be ready to go on the air early in the morning.

## Evaluation

### *Criteria*

- "Getting it" (Do consumers understand?)
- Knowledge (Can consumers recognize and recall?)
- Attitude change (Where does the brand stand?)
- Behavior (Will people buy the product or service?)

### *Methods*

- Survey
- Attendance or participation
- Frequency of inquiry

### *Results*

- Performance review
- Gauging success
- Changing strategies
- Different approach

## Applying the Concepts

1. What is your budget? What can you do to minimize the amount of money you have to devote to marketing?
2. Are there any local media, companies, or organizations that might be interested in a partnership? How could you approach them?
3. What would be the easiest way for you to evaluate your campaign? How would you define success?
4. Evaluation Form: The example evaluation form below asks such questions as how people found out about the Extension program and the frequency of the messages, among other topics. Use the form as a guide as you develop your own evaluation instrument.

## Example Evaluation Form

Date: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_ Home County of Participant: \_\_\_\_\_

Title of Program: \_\_\_\_\_

How did you hear about this program? (Check all that apply)

- |                                                       |                                                       |
|-------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Television                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Online                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Radio                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Direct Mailing               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Newspaper                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Poster/flyer                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Magazine                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Word of mouth                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Newsletter/brochure/pamphlet | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) _____ |

How frequently did you hear about this program?

- 1 time       2-3 times       4 or more times

Where else could the marketing for this program have reached you?

Would you tell others about this or similar programs in the future?

- Yes     No

On the following scale, please rate your perceptions of this program.

*Helpful*    1    2    3    4    5    6    7    8    *Unhelpful*

On the following scale, please rate your overall attitude toward Extension.

*Negative*    1    2    3    4    5    6    7    8    *Positive*

Figure 1.