



Landcare Notes

How to market your group successfully

Marketing uses different techniques to attract customers. If you understand the principals of marketing, you will be more effective in promoting your group to gain greater support, sponsorship, new members and awareness of your land management concerns. It will also help you plan successful events.

This Landcare Note outlines some of the basics of marketing and how these principles can be used to promote your group and its goals.

What is marketing?

Marketing is often thought of in terms of selling and advertising but it is really about what an organisation needs to do to attract and keep its customers.

Using marketing principles can be a useful tool to grow your Landcare group and support its work.

Marketing involves finding out about the people or organisations that could help you, now and in the future. First, though, you need to know who you are targeting and the best way to approach them, depending on who that audience is.

For example, if you want funding from an organisation, then marketing your group to that funding body would be a good idea. The grant funder will be happy to hear about your success and will remember you when you next ask for help.

If you are successful, keep your 'backers' happy by keeping them in the loop about what you are doing. That way you can go back to them next time with less effort and more chance of success. They know you and what you are trying to do and will be confident they're investing in a good cause.

Marketing can help you increase local involvement with ideas, information, activities and works. You can do this by developing specific messages and communication tools tailored to the audience you need to reach.

Marketing is about knowing your 'customer' and giving them what they need. So, for a Landcare group, this could mean analysing why people volunteer so you have a good 'hook' and can try to attract more members.

By asking current members and other people you know, you will get a sense of what motivates people to join. Your marketing is then based on what you find out. This might be letting potential volunteers know they will learn lots about their local environment, have fun, meet new people and contribute to their community.

For groups, marketing can help you attract sponsors, find members and keep them and source resources and organisational support from local donors, the CMA and state and local government.

Marketing can also increase the local community's respect for what you do, raise your profile and attract people to your events.

How to do it

Marketing at group level does not need to be as complex as it is in a major organisation. It's simply important to understand how to use marketing principles relevant to what you are doing. If you know what you want to achieve, you will know who to talk to and what you need them to know.

Who is your target audience?

Your target audience is the people you most want to talk to. You may need to reach more than one audience and you may need to tailor your message to suit each one.

Your target audience could be:



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- Local landholders – getting them involved, changing practices
- Local media – to promote your event
- The local community – for support and new members
- The CMA
- Other volunteer organisations, so you can develop partnerships
- Political parties – for support and to influence decision-making
- Funding bodies and corporate sponsors.

No matter who your audience is, you need to get to know them so you can tell them about your work. Draw up a list of these people and why they might want to be involved.

For example, if you are thinking about potential donors, draw up a list of businesses and individuals and the type of resources they could provide. Then ask them what they might want if they were involved with your group and tailor your approach to them, based on that information. They're more likely to provide support if there are benefits for them from the arrangement.

What can your group offer?

You should clearly identify what you need and what you can provide, remembering different target audiences will be interested for a wide range of reasons.

The sort of things you can offer to a business, the community or a funding body include:

- A sense of local ownership, involvement and pride
- A relationship with a well-managed group that is contributing to the community
- A potential platform for advertising and/or promotion of the company or organisation
- An opportunity for staff to be involved in a 'hands on' way.

Dealing with competitors

Funds, material, people and time are scarce resources and there is always plenty of competition for them. If your group is clear about what you are doing, and why, this will help you 'sell' your group. Without changing your aims, you can tailor your message and its delivery to better suit the audience you want to reach, which will make you a very strong competitor.

Networking

Building networks is one of the best ways to promote yourselves and what you are doing. Between your members, you may already know the people you need to reach and how to reach them, so use your knowledge and connections. If you don't already know them, do your homework and widen your circle.

Other Landcare Notes that can help build the strength of your group include Landcare Notes: 3.5 Local Fundraising; 9.4 Celebrations and Recognition; 6.4 Raising the Group Profile; 5.6 Planning and Running Events.

Further references

Victorian Landcare Gateway:
www.landcarevic.org.au

Victorian Landcare – Being Investor Ready (2004): www.landcarevic.org.au

Landcare Australia- Find a Case Study:
www.landcareonline.com/

Port Phillip and Westernport CMA (2004) - *Stories of Success*:
www.ppwcm.vic.gov.au/downloads/StoriesCommunityLS.pdf

Our Community – Marketing, Media and Post Centre:
http://www.ourcommunity.com.au/marketing/marketing_main.jsp

Related Landcare Notes

This Landcare Note is one of a series. These notes provide an excellent guide for the ongoing operation of your group.



Victorian
Landcare
Program

Landcare Notes

Landcare Note 6.6

Landcare Note 3.5: Local Fundraising
Landcare Note 5.6: Planning and Running Events
Landcare Note 6.4: Raising the Group Profile
Landcare Note 9.4: Celebration and Recognition

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Compiled by the Port Phillip and Westernport Catchment Management Authority's Landcare Support Team

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