

5 Promotion and publicity

5.1 Strategic purpose

The committee should consider the several reasons and implications which have motivated them to organise a national exhibition. This will include:

- To provide an opportunity to promote and publicise our hobby to the wider public, especially those who are collectors but not society members.
- To provide a platform for society members nationally to show off their material in a competitive and valued structure.
- To create an opportunity to sustain and increase interest in local philatelic society membership and activities.
- To facilitate trading opportunities for both buyers and sellers.

5.2 Identify your target audiences

Trade

While the NZSDA representative has a major role in encouraging other dealers to take a stand at the exhibition this cannot be taken for granted. The committee should be able to demonstrate to potential stand holders there is active promotion of the event to attract customers.

Stand holders (including NZ Post) will do a certain amount of advertising on their own behalf but they will have an expectation some of the stand rental fee they will be paying is being used to publicise the event.

Exhibitors

Exhibitors have choices where and when they exhibit. Advice to them of the exhibition should cover conditions of entry including fees and closing dates to enable them to make a choice. Efforts need to be made to get them to also attend, and such a decision would be encouraged by the information provided about the event and possible places and associated activities they and their partners could visit or attend.

On-going updated information leading to the exhibition (e.g. through bulletins, website updates or personal communications from the exhibitions officer, etc.) maintains the level of interest.

Stamp society / club members

Such people are already involved in the hobby and messages to them should be addressing the exhibits that will be on show, the trade stands they can visit and the friends and colleagues they will meet. They could be interested in the merchandise on offer; join a supporters' club if offered; may wish to volunteer assistance during the show; and they, as well as the society / club they belong to, are potential donors. Again, updated information leading to the exhibition should be provided.

Collectors

Dealers and NZ Post advise most of their clients are not members of societies/clubs. While it would be great to encourage such people to join up many have already decided not to, however it doesn't mean we shouldn't try. These people are most likely interest in the trade stands but could also be interested in exhibition merchandise.

NZSDA and NZ Post may have regular contact with such people though mailout, auction catalogues, etc. The NZSDA and NZ Post representatives could be asked for assistance in this area but material (e.g. brochure, pamphlets or the content of such) probably needs to be prepared to assist them.

General public

The public is potentially the largest source of foot traffic but also the hardest to predict in terms of the likely level of interest and what will attract them.

People with inherited collections to sell to dealers are unlikely to have interest in viewing exhibits or buying merchandise. However, they need to be made aware of the exhibition and the opportunity it provides them.

One impact appearing to arise out of Covid-19 was people discovering their old collections or starting new ones as they came to realise collecting of this sort was something that could be carried out and enjoyed even during lockdown.

NZPF has spoken of three age cohorts around which our efforts to encourage collecting should be focussed. These are the young cohort less than 20 years old, middle cohort typically 40 to 65 years old and the older cohort retired and over 65 years old.

Addressing publicity to the new and returning collectors or one of the age cohorts may lead to some novel and interesting ways of attracting them to the exhibition. For example, at the International Exhibition New York 2016 one of the busiest areas of the venue was one aimed at adult beginners.

Potential visitors to the exhibition could be those people with interests outside stamps or postcards but to whom specific subjects on these items relate to their hobby or collection. Such people could be attracted by the theme of the show reflected in the merchandise on offer; the nature of stories the committee has managed to have covered in the media; or alternative hobby displays at the venue during the exhibition. Examples at exhibitions have included models (railways, aircraft, ships, etc.) and vintage vehicles.

5.3 Marketing plan and budget

An overall plan should be developed which encompasses the many identified strategies intended to be adopted to publicise and promote the event. Within the identified expenditure of the exhibition budget, it will be essential to develop a comprehensive range of different media types and placements to achieve a balance of reach and optimum saturation. Components will include:

- **Paid advertising** – generally a combination of print, electronic and radio media but could also include facets such as bus advertising, hoardings, press inserts, etc.
- **Community based** – non- or low-cost options which may include shop window posters, library or museum posters and displays, banners, community access radio, breakfast radio interviews, editorial stories in community newspapers and magazines.

A key aspect is to build a **local news story** to promote the exhibition around some aspect of the event e.g, pigeon mail release, vintage mail van, visiting celebrity, rare stamp to be displayed, etc. Focus on the wider public with themes that are essentially of general interest (even quirky) and rather less philatelic but newsworthy.

- **Commercial contributors** (NZ Post and dealers) – ensure regular news release and relevant entry details to enable fullest use of their existing client data bases and mail order streams to publicise the event.

Compile a publicity budget which realistically addresses the planned advertising and promotion costs, but which ideally has a contingency to permit some reactive flexibility. Ensure the authorisation of marketing expenditure is specifically delegated.

Develop a timeline. Some aspects require significant advanced placement (for example, magazine articles must be prepared and approved well before published date) whereas the critically important saturated paid advertising immediately prior to the event (and indeed also during the event) cannot be overemphasised.

5.4 Media used

Attached as Appendix 5.1 are details of various types of media the committee might consider. Not all may be relevant as they are not available in the exhibition location or are cost prohibitive.

The committee should review these options and any others that might be available and not listed. Each have pros and cons and some effort is needed to identify what these might be. Some estimates of possible cost and the technical input required (which may or may not be available to the committee) to achieve a satisfactory result are required.

Appendix 5.1 Advertising media

This Appendix aims to provide an overview of a range of media options. Not all will suit your needs and there may be others not covered relating to your circumstances – qualified and knowledgeable personnel on your committee or available to it, your geographical location (metropolitan or regional), etc.

Newspapers

- Metros, regionals and weekends
- Suburban (generally free to readers)

Newspapers' role in publicity / advertising is continually changing. The extent to which any publicity or advertising taken with newspapers remains as print media only (as most have alternate electronic platforms as well) is an issue but they are a medium most of us remain familiar with.

In the past, organising committees have largely concentrated on newspapers for paid advertisements and seeking placements for stories related to the exhibition.

In relation to paid advertising this can range from full-page advertorials (i.e. a mix of paid advertising and article) to small slots either placed in the 'entertainment' / 'what's on?' areas or 'run-of-press' where there the paper places the ad to fit. [Note if the ad is placed in good time 'run-of-press' can be very effective – e.g. page 3 without the full cost associated with such placement.]

Many of the newspapers in an area are published by the same company and advertising in multiple papers often provides rates for each less than would an ad in that paper alone.

Stories written by the organising committee are often difficult to place (more likely if the paper is receiving paid advertising). If a reporter is attracted by a story relevant to the readership (most often a story dealing with an individual or a specific interesting item) the effort to provide such material pays off.

Magazines

- General such as *AA Directions*, *Listener*, *Air NZ*, *Qantas*, etc.

General magazines, such as *Directions* and *The Listener*, have a wide readership and are kept and read over more time than a typical newspaper. Others like airline magazines have a 'captive' audience but it is doubtful many would be part of the target audience for a stamp exhibition. It is not easy to get editorial material in magazine and this might more likely occur if, for example, the magazine is planning a story around activities in the area in which the exhibition is being held.

- Philatelic such as *Australasian Stamp News*, *Gibbons Stamp Monthly*, *CP News*, *APF News*, etc.

Philatelic magazines will normally be happy to record basic information about the exhibition along with similar events elsewhere. Obviously, they accept paid advertising but again care is needed to assess the likely target audience this might reach.

Australasian Stamp News and *APF News* may be more open to approaches to publish editorial material. It would be wise to approach them early to request some coverage, investigate print deadlines, etc.

Television

Paid advertising can be expensive both in terms of preparing the ad and for viewing time. Some coverage might be possible, say on the first day of the show where some TV filming might be done at the exhibition but there is no guarantee any footage is shown as it may be 'bumped' by some more newsworthy items. However, it could still be worthwhile letting the TV stations know about the exhibition and what they might see or do, particularly on the opening day.

Radio

- Commercial
- Community

Community radio stations do provide a free-to-air public notice service. In this case the message should be brief and provide concise information about what, where and when. Such announcements are usually provided in the week or so running up to the event and run several times each day.

Paid advertising on commercial stations need not be expensive but you should have a clear idea what message you want to get over and when and whether you believe your audience will be listening. Rates depend on frequency and timing of play.

A radio reporter or station may be interested in interviews or the possibility of 'talk-back' could be investigated. It would be important you have a person suitable for such tasks and messages about the exhibition and its related activities and theme prepared.

Outdoor advertising

- Cross-street banners, billboards

A major benefit of cross-street banners and static billboards is they are often on permanent display for many days and sometimes weeks before the exhibition. Placement is important to ensure your likely audience passes the site/s where they are installed and often a good location is near the planned venue (indeed they may have banner or billboard options for you). Sometimes there is significant cost in painting/printing and installing cross-street banners and billboards particularly if they are located over or closely adjacent to a busy highway.

Dynamic billboards are now appearing in larger cities and towns. The cost of preparing the message is considerably cheaper (as it is simply an electronic file) but display costs are generally higher. Also, the message will likely not be the only one displayed at the site with a full range of ads appearing at set frequencies and duration (depending on payment).

Some venues also have message boards visible to the public detailing upcoming and current events. Such signs may be within the venue, particularly if it is one that holds multiple public events and visitors to such other events are able to see the messages.

- Feather and tear-drop flags

There has been little experience of these at past exhibitions. Individual costs do not seem exorbitant, but a major issue could be placement and installation. Checks should be made with the local council (road controlling authority) regarding any restrictions on use.

- Pull down banners, notice boards, etc.

These are typically mobile pull-down signs often used immediately outside a venue. Weather (particularly susceptibility to wind) would have to be considered and they would typically have to be stored overnight rather than on display.

- Posters

Posters could range from over A0-size to around A4.

The larger ones would be intended for billboards (posted or pasted). Because of the size professional printing could be required. They likely will be subject to local bylaws so care should be taken where they are placed.

The smaller ones would be for small public notice boards often found at supermarkets, libraries, information centres, etc. and local businesses and service might be prepared to display them. Local society members could be asked to distribute the smaller posters in their own neighbourhood. If A4 they are capable of being printed on a standard home printer.

Direct mail

- Exhibition bulletins

In the past the main method for getting information out to the audience was regular bulletins (newsletters) from the exhibition. The issues have tended to decrease over time and now there may no more than three or four published. The prime factor in this has been cost of production and postage although these costs can be reduced by sending the material out by email to those who request them that way.

The first Bulletin usually provides basic details about the exhibition when, where and what and includes the Prospectus for the exhibition. This latter document provides details for exhibitors about dates, costs, classes of exhibits, etc. Subsequent Bulletins have provided details of accommodation, transport, planned activities and product for sale to help raise fund for running the exhibition with order forms.

- Society newsletters, etc.

Approaching stamp societies and clubs asking if they would be willing to distribute the first (and subsequent) bulletins, brochure or other print media is sensible. Many now largely distribute their own (or a substantial number of) newsletters to members by email. Your request should seek numbers of hard copy, and advice you would be happy to forward electronic copies for them to distribute with their newsletter.

- NZSDA - article or insert in auction lists or other mailouts.

Members of the NZSDA will generally be willing to note basic information about the exhibition in material they send to their clients. Guidance from your NZSDA co-ordinator should be sought.

- NZ Post – insert with mailouts to specified clients (i.e., NZ only, region specific)

NZ Post Collectables may be willing to print and distribute flyers to their clients. However, they may prefer to include material in *Focus* (produced every six months) and some limited information in their more regular Stamps and Coins new issue. Guidance from your NZ Post co-ordinator should be sought.

Other print media

- Pamphlets, brochures, postcards

This group of items is aimed at providing information about the exhibition in a form that can be put into counter displays at outlets who have agreed. Examples might be Information Centres, local libraries, local body offices, Citizens' Advice Bureaus, etc. They are of a size that can easily be picked up by the public and taken with them. Postcards give the potential for someone to send it to a friend or acquaintance.

Electronic

- "What's on" sites

There are sites which provide free, or cheap, registration of your exhibition so someone searching for information about events occurring in your town will find the information. Often, payment of a fee will enable your entry to be given more prominent positioning. While some of this occurs naturally as your event nears its date this higher profile is worth considering.

- Social media

Most people now access information via phones and computers. For example, information typically found in hard copy newspapers are now more likely to be accessed this way. You will find when considering newspaper advertising you will be given an option to use or extend your coverage using electronic advertising options.

Online social networking services such as Facebook, Instagram, twitter, etc. and other electronic options are areas where previous exhibition organising committees have had little experience. Perhaps it is a great opportunity for you to involve some of your younger members or their children in helping to develop ways to use such media as it is they who will more likely be users and are part of your target audience.

Websites

- Use existing society website

If your society already has a website, then the exhibition should most likely be part of that. The advantage is that whoever is the webmaster for your society page would be best able to assist you develop the exhibition site.

- NZPF website

The NZPF website provides a high level of support for exhibition organising committees. Once the exhibition has been approved information to that effect is shortly added to the 'future exhibitions' page. Usually on receipt of the approved Prospectus (although it may occur earlier) a page on the website is created devoted to the exhibition. If the committee has created a web contact this is always referenced as it is important the most up-to-date information is available to those visiting the NZPF site. Please look at the NZPF website at <https://nzpf.org.nz/exhibitions/exhibitions-previous-years/> and any current exhibitions to see what has been done for a range of previous exhibitions.

- Other websites

The Australian Philatelic Federation site is an important site as your exhibition will be supported by exhibitors from Australia under the NZPF/APF Accord. Check <https://apf.org.au/philatelic-exhibition-timetable/>

There are many other websites which list details of upcoming exhibitions and the choice is yours if you wish to ensure such sites are made aware of your exhibition and request they update their site.

- Create your own website

If your society does not have a website serious consideration should be given to this option.

Your own website allows you to ensure up-to-date information is made available to everyone with a potential interest. It allows you to market your product (and may include having an on-line shop which facilitates purchase). The major disadvantage is that you need to have available a web designer and someone (linked closely to your committee) who can and DOES update the website as decisions and other changes are made – your site should reflect NOW. These people, if you are lucky, may be the same person.

Costs can vary considerably but need not be great. However, care is needed to ensure the site does what you need, not what might be nice to have.

Merchandise

Most organising committees develop product to raise funds to assist with the exhibition. Most commonly this has been personalised stamps (previously known as CALs) or Cinderellas with associated first day covers, maximum cards, etc.

In most cases the surplus from this source is not always as good as is anticipated particularly when considering the time and effort required to design, produce and distribute the items. However, what they can be is a good direct source of publicity and a vehicle for associated publicity in one or other of the various media described above.