

Marketing and Sponsorship

Module One- **The promotion and marketing of your club**

All sport and recreation clubs actively market and promote club activities on a daily basis. Every time a club member talks to family, friends and associates about the weekend's game or the social event they have recently participated in the club is being promoted and marketed.

This 'word of mouth' approach is usually described as *informal marketing*. This type of promotion and marketing also extends to how individuals within a club respond to external queries and requests, how new members are treated when they first join a club and how the general membership of a club acts and presents itself when participating in club activities that are conducting in public and visible to non-members.

Club officials cannot control the activities of all individual club members so it is important that a club culture is positive and the experiences of club members result in positive messages being delivered into the community.

Parents of a junior player who has experienced poor coaching or bad selection practices are unlikely to make positive statements to others about the club. Similarly, members who are subjected to inefficient administrative practices and poorly run club procedures are unlikely to recommend the club to others.

Clubs that conduct activities on public ovals and sports grounds need to be aware that the behavior of players and supporters will provide a direct message to the local community. How club members and their supporters behave in public places when participating in club activities may have an impact on the marketing and promotion of the club.

The young family enjoying the playground next to the sports field could be potential club members. The man walking his dog could be a potential club sponsor.



Activity

Think about the informal marketing messages your club is spreading throughout the community.

How does your club treat new members?

Does the behaviour of club members on game days providing a positive message about your club?

What can the club do to ensure all its members provide consistent and positive informal marketing messages?

Although a club cannot control the activities and comments of each of its individual members it can provide information, advice and guidelines that tell each of its members what the club expects.

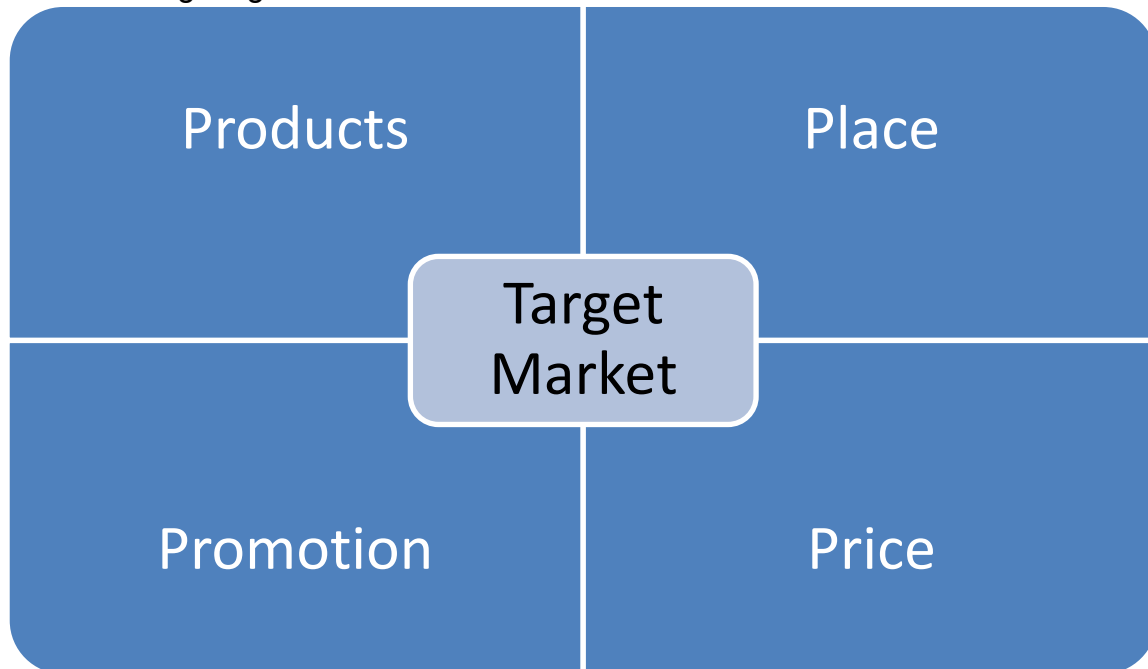
By using code of conduct and procedure documents a club can advise its members what is expected and what is unacceptable behaviour and through this mechanism can greatly influence the informal marketing messages.

As well as setting up an appropriate environment to influence informal marketing, a club needs to establish the necessary systems and processes to deliver its *formal marketing* strategies.

Marketing may be defined as the process through which an individual or organisation achieves an outcome or gets what is wanted by developing and delivering a message about a particular service, product or activity.

In the development and delivery of the message, it is usual to consider the 'four Ps' of marketing as part of the 'marketing mix'.

The following diagram shows the 'four Ps'.



- *Products* are the goods or services that an organisation supplies to its target market. For sport and recreation clubs the products are the activities, competitions and social events that membership of the club will provide.
- *Place* is all about location. Where the goods and services are available or will be distributed. For clubs the definition of place relates to the venues, ovals, recreational facilities and sports grounds where activities, games and competitions are held and the clubrooms and facilities that are available to members.
- *Price* concerns the amount of money that a customer must pay to purchase the goods or services. In sport and recreation clubs price is related to the cost of membership fees, other costs for participating including the cost of apparel and equipment, the cost of social activities and events or the cost of club merchandise. Price may also be related to the cost of sponsoring a club.
- *Promotion* is the process used by the organisation to communicate the features and benefits of its goods and services and the methods used to persuade customers to purchase these goods and services. For clubs the promotional element is focused on convincing people to become members, sponsors or supporters and the various mechanisms and methods used to get the membership message out.

The primary goals of promotion and marketing at the club level are to attract new members and to retain the existing members, position the club effectively in the community, attract sponsors and maintain support.

The effective marketing of a club will deliver the following outcomes:

- Support the sustainability of the club
- Identify opportunities for growth
- Clearly communicate what your club does and what it has to offer
- Improve visibility in the local community
- Attract members, volunteers and sponsors
- Provide positive messages to exist members and support retention



Activity

Think about your club's 'marketing mix' and answer the questions in the following table.

What is your club's target market?	
What are the 'products' that your club offers to its target market?	
Where are the 'places' your club offers its services?	
What 'prices' does your club charge for its main services?	

Are these prices appropriate for the target market?	
How does your club promote its services?	
Are the current promotional activities successful in 'selling the services' of your club?	

As the name implies, *formal marketing* messages need to be properly planned and developed with a particular objective in mind. These messages are not the informal and ad hoc approaches that individual club members initiate, but are the club's official approach to objectives such as increasing membership, securing sponsors, and attracting volunteers.

A club should have in place an over-arching marketing strategy or plan that sets out some long term objectives and outcomes for the club in terms of member attraction and retention, sponsorship and so on. Clubs should also plan for minor promotion and marketing events such as player registration days.

Regardless of the scope, marketing plans should define what it is that the club wants to achieve through its marketing efforts, the media to be used and the costs associated with the activity.

The following table shows a simple marketing strategy for a club that wants to increase the number of girls participating in junior competition.

Marketing objective: Register 30 additional junior girls in the 8 to 11 age group

Activities	Media	Cost
Develop a flyer for circulation to all primary schools in the region	PDF – hard copy version for distribution	Desktop publishing costs - \$150 Printing costs – full colour - \$110
Make an electronic version of the flyer available to schools for insertion in newsletters	PDF – electronic version for distribution	Nil
Place flyer on community notice boards in local shopping centres, libraries and community sports centres	PDF – hard copy version for placement	Covered by initial printing costs
Highlight issue on the club website	Story, photos and PDF for club website	Professional photos - \$130
Provide a draft story and photograph to local community newspapers	Story and photos	Nil
Provide text to local community radio on the need to increase girl's participation – link to membership requirements	Story	Nil
Develop professional signage for display on clubrooms on game days	Signage	Sign - \$165
	Total cost	\$555

Return on investment

30 additional players @ \$120 registration fee	= \$3600
Cost of governing body registration and insurance	= \$1950

	\$1650
Marketing costs	\$555

Revenue retained	\$1095

When developing a simple plan such as the one presented, you should also consider who will be responsible for the completion of the various activities and the timing of those activities.



Activity

Think about some of the things your club wants to achieve. Do you want to increase membership or secure additional sponsors? Do you want to attract better quality players? Is there a need to diversify the club's income or to secure the financial sustainability of the club?

Select an area and develop a marketing objective. Use the table below to identify the activities, media and costs and retained revenue associated with the marketing effort.

How much is it going to cost the club? Will there be any retained revenue?

Marketing objective:

Activities	Media	Cost
	Total cost	\$

Return on investment

Activities	= \$	
Other costs	= \$	

	\$	
Marketing costs	\$	

Revenue retained	\$	