

Mid-Atlantic District



CHAPTER MARKETING TOOLBOX

The 2014 MAD District Marketing Team

Eric Herr, MAD VP, Marketing & PR

Steve Skolnick, MAD Asst VP, Marketing & PR

In this document, we will examine the current methods that chapters can use to increase awareness, for both marketing and membership purposes.

It is intended to be a living document, with constant revisions ensuring the document will always have the best practices to be shared among chapters to the betterment of the society.

No amount of marketing will help your chapter if you don't know your product and target, so ensure that before you endeavor on your marketing journey, you understand the product you are selling and your target market. Also be sure to set realistic goals to ensure success, test, evaluate your results, then build on that success.

Setting Marketing Goals

It is so important to set realistic goals! Marketing is just one function inside the chapter, and can sometimes appear to the board as a drain on valuable resources.

Most of what we will present will be little to no cost, but will take some effort. Assess where you are, what has been done in the past, and build upon the successes. Don't be afraid to try something again that has failed in the past, with minor tweaks it may now work.

It is important to have clear goals written down, with deliverable dates.

Understand Your Product and Target Market

Yes you are a barbershop chorus, but are you a show chorus, a competition chorus, a daytime chorus? What is the average age? How is your singing quality?

You need to know answers to all of these, because when you are marketing for finding prospective members, you will want to find guys that will stick around. If 70 is your average age, guys between 60-50 year old will probably be your best target. Age is not the only consideration, so is singing quality.

- Rate your performance level
- Rate your activity level

- Determine what type of chapter you are

You may determine that your singing level needs to improve before embarking on a major marketing effort. Speak with your chapter counselor, director, and board. Gain consensus.

There is nothing worse then getting guys in the door via marketing and not having them come back, make sure the product is good and the target is right.

Marketing Your Chapter:

Signage

Most successful business wouldn't think of existing without a sign, yet most barbershop chapters don't have a sign telling people they exist. Get a banner or yard sign made, put it up the day you rehearse outside with the time rehearsal starts. One new member makes it worthwhile. "Barbershop Harmony Here Tonight, 7:30"

Websites

Your website is one of the first things someone sees before deciding to visit your chorus, and it must be compelling. It should convey the fun we all have singing. A nice home page photo is a good way to do this. As you can see from the picture below from the top of the Voices of Gotham's home page, it's not the static picture from contest before we go on stage, it's a picture taken with the chorus singing, and clearly enjoying themselves.



[about](#) | [book](#) | [calendar](#) | [contact](#) | [join](#) | [support](#) | [quartets](#)



This picture can be from contest or a show, and it does NOT need to show the whole chorus as shown below from the Morris Music Men website, they obviously have older members, but still the picture can still convey our love for singing:

The Morris Music Men
Barbershop Harmony Chorus

[Home](#)
[About Us](#)
[Calendar of Events](#)
[Our Quartets](#)
[Chapter Officers](#)
[Become a Member](#)
[Links](#)
[Contact Us](#)

SINGERS WANTED

Gloria Dei Lutheran Church
300 Shunpike Road
Chatham, NJ

[Click here for Directions](#)

Book A Performance
Chorus Performances
Quartets for any Event

[Singing Valentines](#)

[Upcoming Performances](#) [Get Performance Alerts by email](#)

 BARBERSHOP HARMONY

Search Engine Optimization (SEO)

Search engine optimization is the process of getting your site higher in the natural search results of the different search engines. Google is the largest search engine, so we generally focus on them.

Natural Search vs Paid Search

The search results can be broken into two sections, natural and paid. Search engine optimization (SEO) focuses on the natural search, the ones you don't have to pay for. Since the search engine is providing these links to your website for free, they are harder to get.

In the next picture below you will see three listings on top in tan, and listings off of the right side. Those are paid listings, which we will cover later. Everything below the tan box on the left are the natural search results. The higher you are on these, the more likely a searcher will find

Ads related to **fireplace glass doors 07960** ⓘ

Fireplace Glass (855) 237-2063
www.elitecustomglass.com/
Huge Online Sale! Custom **Glass** Shapes & Sizes, Delivered To You.
[Glass Table Tops](#) - [Custom made Mirrors](#) - [Tempered Glass](#)

Fireplace Glass Doors - Huge Selection Of Fireplace Doors
www.woodlanddirect.com/
Free Shipping On Orders Over \$99!
[Design Specialties Fireplace Doors](#) - [Diamond W Fireplace Doors](#)

Lowe's® Fireplace Doors - Lowes.com
www.lowes.com/
★★★★★ 6,240 reviews for lowes.com
Visit Lowe's® Today For A Wide Selection Of **Fireplace Doors!**
Lowe's Home Improvement has 118,836 followers on Google+
[Register for MyLowe's](#) - [Store Locator](#) - [Weekly Ads](#) - [Gift Cards](#)

Fireplace Place - Wood, Gas, Electric Fireplaces, Pellet, Coal ...
www.thefireplaceplace.com/ ▾
Come visit our showroom and find over 30 burning displays, Many **Electric Fireplaces**, 47 **Fireplace Glass Doors** and Mantels/Surrounds. The largest display in ...
[Gas Fireplaces](#) - [Electric Fireplaces](#) - [Wood Burning Fireplaces](#) - [Gas Logs \(Vented\)](#)

Fireplace Glass Doors - The Fireplace Place, Fairfield, NJ - Stock or ...
www.thefireplaceplace.com/FireplaceGlassDoors.htm ▾
Fireplace Glass Doors - The **Fireplace Place** in Fairfield, NJ has a large selection of **Fireplace Glass Doors**. From stock **glass doors** in standard sizes and ...

Ads ⓘ

Fireplace Glass Doors
www.fireplacedoorsonline.com/
(877) 373-6677
Buy Direct - Free Shipping
Wide Selection Of **Fireplace Doors**

Fireplace Glass Doors
www.ironhaus.com/
1 (866) 379 8348
Fireplace Glass Doors, Beautiful Finishes. Satisfaction Guaranteed

Fire Place Glass
www.gaslogguys.com/
(877) 743-2269
#1 **Fire Place Glass** Retailer! Huge Selection, Low Prices, Free S/H.

Morris County. #1 Chimney
www.aaa-superior.com/
Want a Better Price? Clean & Repair Proudly Serving All Morris County

Fireplace Glass Doors
www.amazon.com/
Buy **fireplace glass doors** at Amazon! Qualified orders over \$25 ship free

Fireplace Doors
www.kirkfireplace.com/

your site by searching.

Obviously you would like to get your chorus's site to the top of the natural search results. Below you will find some strategies that can help.

On Page SEO

These are elements that you can change on your websites page to help your website rank higher on your top keyword searches, these are the easiest things to have your webmaster do. They may be beyond your understanding, but your webmaster should understand them.

Meta Tags - Title, Descriptions, Keywords

Meta Tag: Title - this is your page title, looking at web browser, it's what appears at the very top of the browser window, you probably have never noticed it. The page title is one of the key elements telling the search engine what your page is all about. A lot of sites have "home" for their home page. That's why if you google the word "home" there are literally 12.5 trillion web results.

If you look at the image above of the search results, it is what is bold and underlined. You want to have your top keywords in there. This is Voices of Gotham's home page title:

Voices of Gotham - New York a cappella chorus (singing) - NYC - NY Chorus - all mens choir - nyc barbershop chorus

They are using their home page to attract a broad base of singers, not specifically barbershop singers, they have a dedicated page just for that.

This is the title from that page:

barbershop chorus, NYC barbershop chorus, New York Barbershop chorus

Meta Tag: Page Description

Page description serves two roles, it also contributes to telling the search engine what your web page is about, but more critically it tells the searcher what your page is about. If you look at the image below, the description is the several lines of copy below your page title that the search engine displays in the search results. The page description needs to have your keywords, be descriptive, and be relevant and compelling to the searcher.

Here is Voices of Gotham's home page description:

Voices of Gotham - Barbershop Chorus in New York City. We are an all male a cappella chorus and a chapter of the Barbershop

Harmony Society. Comprised of former a cappella singers, professional actors and singers and men who simply enjoy raising their voices in song. Available for booking for your next corporate event, wedding or party.

And this is how it appears in the search results:

[Voices of Gotham - New York a cappella chorus \(singing\) - NYC ...](#)

www.voicesofgotham.org/ ▼

Voices of Gotham - **Barbershop Chorus** in New York City. We are an all male a cappella chorus and a chapter of the Barbershop Harmony Society. Comprised of ...

[3 Google reviews](#) · [Write a review](#)



410 W 40th St New York, NY 10018
(347) 688-0059

When you fail to create a page description, the search engine will do it's best to create a description for it's search results, with predictably poor results.

Here is an example of a Vocal Majority search result:

[Schedule - Vocal Majority](#)

www.vocalmajority.com/fl/performance.asp ▼

[member login](#) · [the vm store](#) · [Home](#) · [PERFORMANCES](#) | [TICKETS](#) | [BOOK](#) | ...

as you can see, this is not helpful to the searcher, and will results in less visits to your website. The page title was "Schedule- Vocal Majority" and they did not provide a description, so google tried its best from the page content.

Meta Tag: Keywords

These are the words, or word phrases the searcher uses to find your website. Here is a list of the most popular national keywords that would be relevant.

barbershop chorus
a-cappella chorus
singing
barbershop singing
choir

and these are the keywords from Voices of Gotham's home page:

`ny chorus. new york a capella chorus, ny choir, barbershop chorus, voices of gotham, nyc choir`

As you can see, their webmaster added some area specific words to those national keywords to make them more relevant to a local searcher, which is their target.

The last element of the home page SEO is the page copy, it should be compelling and natural in the main copy, this is used to SELL your chorus to the searcher. It does not even need to have much copy, it you could achieve most of this with great images. Try NOT to over use your keywords in your copy, just write naturally for your page viewer, not for the search engine.

We retain the bottom of the page for the SEO stuff. Again, the part of the page most people ignore. Here you will will make sure everything is covered. If you are using images for your navigation or something dynamic, you should provide static links for the search engine. You should also end the page with your top keywords.

Below is the bottom of the Voices of Gotham home page (actually on it's on every page). You will notice static links to the main navigation but also links to other pages not in the main navigation. And the very last thing on the page is the top keywords.



LIVE IN THE SEVENTH

[About Us](#) | [Quartets](#) | [Book the Chorus](#) | [Contact Us](#) | [Join Us](#)

Voices of Gotham, the premier New York Area a-cappella chorus - A top NY Choir

[Barbershop Links](#) | [Live in the Seventh](#) | [Members](#) | [Home](#) | [Singing Valentines NYC](#) | [Barbershop Chorus](#) | [Show Tickets](#)

© 2013 Voices of Gotham, New York Area Barbershop Chorus

Its is **very important** that the title, description, copy, and end of the page match, otherwise you are just confusing the search engine as to what the page is about.

Off Page SEO

Off page SEO are the elements that are harder to control but are also critically important. At the heart of off page SEO are back links. Those are where another site has a link to your site. It is important that these links use your keywords to link to you.

This is what one of the links to Voices of Gotham looks like:

[Barbershop Harmony Chorus - Acapella Singing](#)

and this one links to their home page.

They should not all use the same words, many will just have your chorus name, but as long as they put the word "chorus" at the end it will help. It is best to get links from sites that are related, either other singing organizations, or local stores or clubs. These links tell the search engines both what THAT SITE thinks your site is about (which is good when they match), and how many other sites think your site is about that. A back links is sort of a vote for your site. Those "votes" tell the search engine both what others think your site is about but also how important your site is. The most "important" your site is for a keyword, the higher you will rank for a search result.

Other off page things to consider are:

Google Places

Google Place and other local listing sites are a important part of your SEO, many times your google places listing will show up first and more prominently than your website.

Here is what I get when I searched for “barbershop chorus” from my desk:

barbershop chorus

Steve Skolnick 1

Web Images Maps Shopping News More Search tools

2011 International Barbershop Chorus Champions - YouTube
www.youtube.com/watch?v=p-lfwcP4BpA
 Aug 30, 2011 - Uploaded by BarbershopHarmony38
 Order the DVD with all chorus performances at www.harmonymarketplace.com or call 800-876-7464 . The ...

Ambassadors of Harmony-2009 International Barbershop Chorus ...
www.youtube.com/watch?v=QmDGntpZC3I
 Jul 22, 2009 - Uploaded by BarbershopHarmony38
 Order the DVD with all chorus performances at www.harmonymarketplace.com or call 800-876-7464. The ...



More videos for **barbershop chorus** »

Pine Barons Chorus - Cherry Hill - Harmonize.com
www.harmonize.com/pinebarons/
 The Pine Barons is a men's chorus of more than 30 members who love to sing in four-part Barbershop harmony. We meet Monday nights -- 7:30pm - 10:00pm in ...

Voices of Gotham Barbershop Chorus
www.voicesofgotham.org/
 The Hell's Kitchen New York chapter of the barbershop harmony society. Voices of Gotham - Barbershop Chorus in New York City. We are an all male a cappella ...
 3 Google reviews · Write a review
 You rated it excellent.

410 W 40th St New York, NY 10018
 (347) 688-0059

Barbershop Chorus - New York City (NYC) - Voices of Gotham

Voices of Gotham Barbershop Chorus

Directions Write a review

Address: 410 W 40th St, New York, NY 10018
Phone: (347) 688-0059
Transit: 9 Av - W 40 St

Reviews

3 Google reviews

You rated it excellent.

People also search for

The large result on the right is the google places. You also will see similar results on the maps. This also tells the search engine what your site is about, and since there is a verification process to get a google places account, this and the address and phone tell the search engine that you are real.

As a side note, Voices of Gotham's local phone number is provided **FREE** by Google Voice and transfers to an assigned chorus member. You can learn more about Google Voice here:

<http://www.google.com/voice>

We will dive deeper into Google Voice and other options later in this book.

Reviews

Reviews both on Google, Yelp, and other sites are important. They both serve as ways for searchers to confirm you are who they are looking for, but also serves as another "vote" to prove relevance and importance from the search engines point of view.

Website Analytics

This is where you see the results of your work. Google provides it for free, your webmaster just needs to put some code on your web page.

Below is a link to find out more about google analytics and how to sign up.

<http://www.google.com/analytics/>

Analytics are important, they show you what pages are working, how many unique visitors, where they are coming from and more.

Social Media

Facebook

Facebook is the monster of social networking, and it's not just teens talking to their friends. There are over a Billion users of Facebook, and your next new member may be one of them. It's important that you have a Facebook page for your chorus, almost as important as a good website.

There are two types of pages your chorus can have, a Group page and Fan page. There are pro's and cons of both. The big pro to a Fan is the ease of someone "liking" your page. They can do it right from your website with the click of Facebook a button.

Here is a example of the bottom of each page from Voices of Gotham's website. Those buttons are widely recognized. Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and Email, one click and you are taken to the choruses presence on each channel.

Here is where you go to when you hit the Facebook button, this is the VOG fan page:



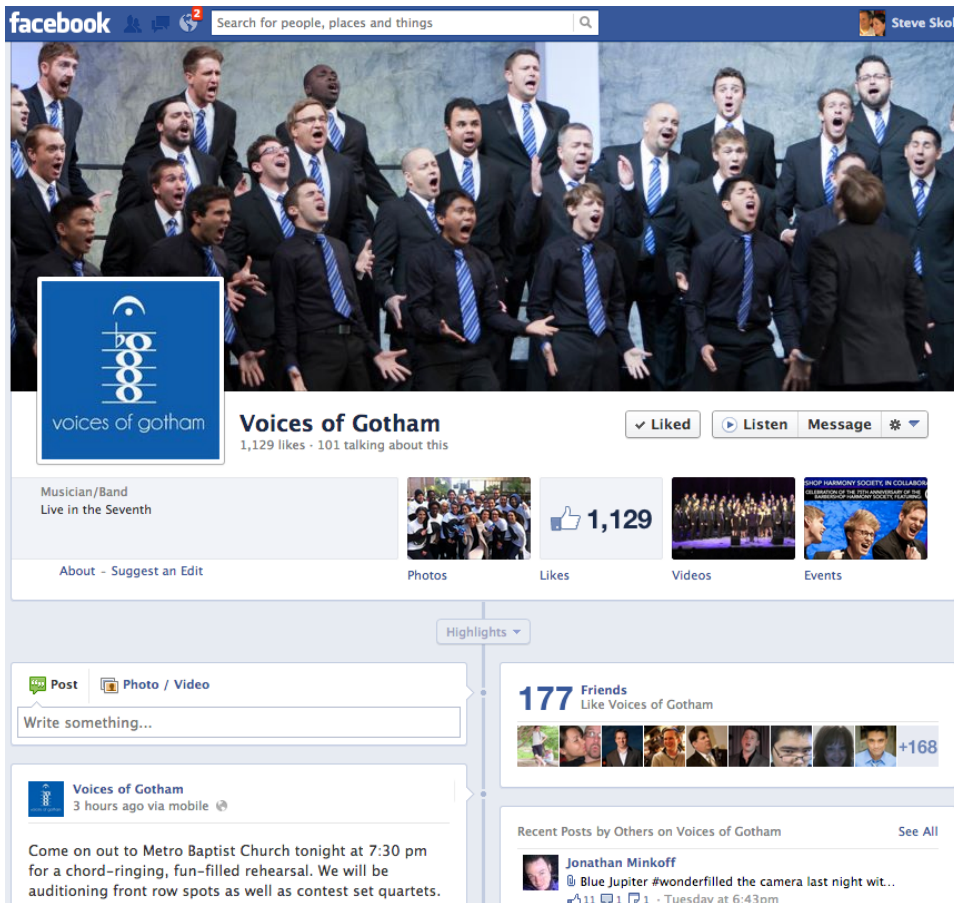
LIVE IN THE SEVENTH

[About Us](#) | [Quartets](#) | [Book the Chorus](#) | [Contact Us](#) | [Join Us](#)

Voices of Gotham, the premier New York Area a-cappella chorus - A top NY Choir

[Barbershop Links](#) | [Live in the Seventh](#) | [Members](#) | [Home](#) | [Singing Valentines NYC](#) | [Barbershop Chorus](#) | [Show Tickets](#)

© 2013 Voices of Gotham, New York Area Barbershop Chorus



The same rules apply here, your Facebook cover photo needs to be compelling and look like you are having fun. The picture needs to sell the hobby and your chorus. Look at the pictures you use now, are they selling your chorus?

To be successful with social media requires everyone in the chorus. Just like membership recruiting, it can not just be the VP of Marketing involved. Have all of your members “like” the page, ask other barbershoppers to “like” your chorus page, get members commenting and posting pictures of the chorus or quartet gigs. Voices of Gotham posts regularly, they even have someone on the marketing team (not the VP of Marketing) who’s job is social media, posting to Facebook, Twitter etc.

Twitter

Twitter is similar to Facebook, except they limit your "tweets" (posts) to 144 characters.

Here is a picture of VOG's twitter feed.



Facebook, Twitter... are just places to connect with your audience and keep the conversation going. You never know where that leads, but most important, it spreads awareness about barbershop to all of their friends, and their friends friends.

If you look the tweets in their twitter feeds, you will see #BHS75, #liveintheseventh, or #HCE those are called hashtags. They are ways to group around common themes. You can search or follow a hashtag.

#BHS75 has been used around the 75th anniversary of the BHS, and #BHSTO around the Toronto convention, #HCE for Harmony College East. They also are being used in tweets and posts as expressions, #firstworldproblems is a common one used, or one used by Gotham in tweets or post about rehearsals, #barbershopharmonytime.

LinkedIn

LinkedIn is a social network for professionals. While it's not something the chorus should be directly participating in yet, don't underestimate the power of LinkedIn for spreading awareness of BHS and your chapter. It is one of the easiest ways to tell your work friends you sing. Get your members to add singing it to their LinkedIn profile and their experience. If they are board members add that too.

Here is a screen shot from part of my LinkedIn profile:

The screenshot shows a mobile view of a LinkedIn profile. At the top, the browser address bar shows 'linkedin.com'. Below the navigation bar, the profile header reads 'Your Profile | LinkedIn'. The main content area is divided into two columns. The left column contains the following sections:

- Partner**
HCNB Holdings
1999 – Present (14 years) | Morristown, NJ
Search Engine Marketing, Monetization of Websites, and Magazine Publishing.
Based on our experience and performance, we are generally considered one of the top SEO firms in the country. While most of our work has been for our own network of sites, we do offer services to select external clients. In addition to excelling at search optimization (getting valued customers to your site), we possess the rare skill of being able to boost a sites conversion rate (boosting your sites performance from your visitors) which has lead to dramatic revenue gains.
We are currently working on the launch of the first of several magazines.
- Asst DVP, Marketing for the Mid Atlantic District**
Barbershop Harmony Society
February 2012 – Present (1 year 8 months)
In this new position as the Asst District VP for Marketing and PR, I am helping BHS chapters in the Mid Atlantic district with discovering new ways to market themselves so they gain awareness in the community to both help find potential new members and to help fill the seats at their shows. Our team is also in the process of creating a marketing and pr e-book.
- Board Member**
Mid Atlantic Hearth, Patio, and BBQ Assn
October 2012 – Present (1 year) | NJ, PA, DE, MD, DC
As a founding member of the MAHPBA, I have returned to serve another term leading this industry trade group. I currently serve on the membership, website, and government affairs committees.
Mid-Atlantic Hearth, Patio & Barbecue Association (MAHPBA) is an affiliate of the Hearth, Patio & Barbecue Association (formerly Hearth Products Association). MAHPBA was formed in October 1999 and includes the states of Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey and Pennsylvania, as well as the District of Columbia. In 2002, with the merger of the Barbecue Industry Association into HPA, we became the Mid-Atlantic Hearth, Patio & Barbecue Association.
Membership is available to all those companies who retail, distribute, represent or service products in the hearth, casual furniture or barbecue industries.
- Chairman**
Festival of Harmony
January 2007 – December 2012 (6 years)

The right sidebar contains a list of connections:

- Yoel Schmell, Manager of Operations
- Talia Lawrence, Actress
- Russell Shelp, Summer Intern in Blaser Lab at NYU School of Medicine
- yossi burstyn, INVESTOR RELATIONS at RIS CAPITAL PARTNERS
- John Pina III, Assistant Attorney General for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Medicaid Fraud Control Unit

Below the connections is a 'People You May Know' section with a row of profile pictures and a '+Connect' button. At the bottom, there is an 'ADS YOU MAY BE INTERESTED IN' section with three advertisements: 'moo Business Cards Sale', 'Marketing Content Champ!', and 'Marketing Cart in 14 Wks'.

People read each other's profiles regularly, and you never know when a new member, fan to buy tickets for your next show, or hire the chorus for a gig will come from. A quartet from Voices of Gotham sang for the board of directors of Deloitte from a members LinkedIn profile.

Foursquare

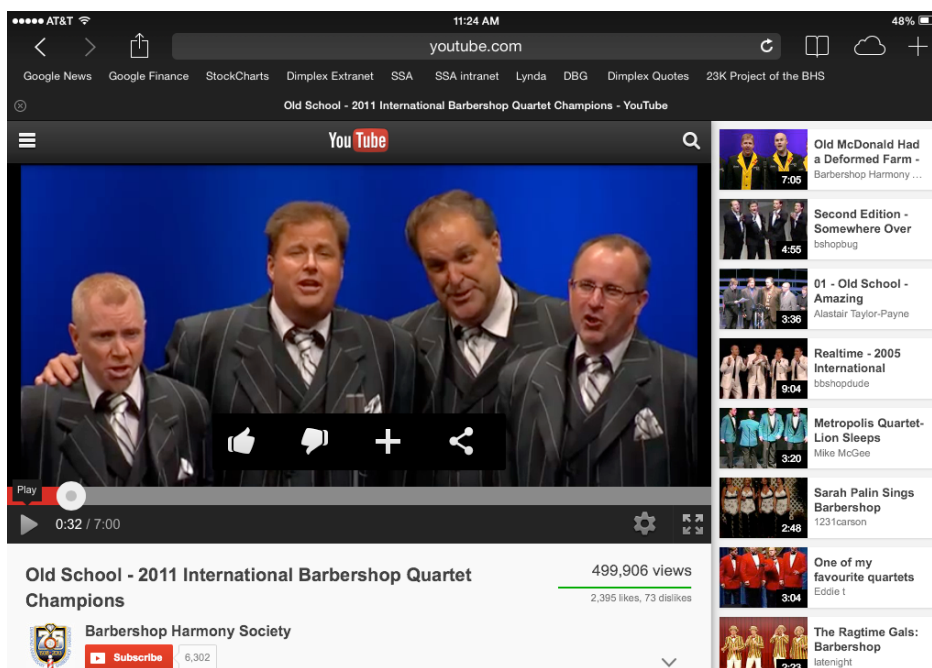
Foursquare allows people to "check in" at locations. Setting your chorus location on foursquare and having members "check in" when they arrive spreads awareness that they sing, these "check ins" are generally shared on Facebook.

<https://foursquare.com/>

Youtube

YouTube allows you to post videos for free. YouTube has over a billion users and over 100 hours a video is loaded each minute. 6 billion hours of video are watched each month, and some of that is barbershop. YouTube can be a wonderful place for someone to discover barbershop. Your involvement can be as simple as posting a video of a quartet delivering a singing valentine, to your chorus can have its own channel. Having a channel is also free.

Here is a screen shot of a video posted by the BHS of Old School:



The screenshot shows a mobile browser view of a YouTube video. The video player displays four men in suits performing barbershop music. The video title is "Old School - 2011 International Barbershop Quartet Champions" and it has 499,906 views. The channel is "Barbershop Harmony Society" with 6,302 subscribers. The video player includes a play button, progress bar (0:32 / 7:00), and a list of recommended videos on the right side.

Old School - 2011 International Barbershop Quartet Champions - YouTube

499,906 views
2,395 likes, 73 dislikes

Barbershop Harmony Society
Subscribe 6,302

Recommended videos:

- Old McDonald Had a Deformed Farm - Barbershop Harmony ... 7:05
- Second Edition - Somewhere Over bshopbug 4:55
- 01 - Old School - Amazing Alastair Taylor-Payne 3:36
- Realtime - 2005 International bshopdude 9:04
- Metropolis Quartet- Lion Sleeps Mike McGee 3:20
- Sarah Palin Sings Barbershop 1231carson 2:48
- One of my favourite quartets Eddie I 3:04
- The Ragtime Gals: Barbershop latelight 2:23

BHS's YouTube channel has over 6,000 subscribers. One Vocal Majority video has over 350,000 views. A Crossroads video over 420,000 as of this writing. That is creating crazy awareness. There are also a host of multi-tracks (one person recording all four parts and putting them together.) One multi track video has almost a million views. The Old School video almost 500,000 views. This is creating awareness much greater than our current society membership.

You do need to be careful when posting as a chorus to have the proper clearances, but it seems to be worth the effort. You can also sing and post some public domain songs to avoid clearance issues.

Public Relations

Newspaper
News Wires
Radio
TV
Press Kit
Cable public access

Harold Hill - Where do you do your singing

Don't forget this important program. Wherever you are, promote the chorus and barbershop harmony.

Arts Councils and Related Music Organizations

What better place to do PR than to a group of other musicians. In the NY area in addition to several arts council websites where we can announce shows, guest night, and auditions, we have Vocal Area Network, a website dedicated to getting people who appreciate the arts to meet others who do.

The image is a screenshot of a mobile browser displaying the website for the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council (LMCC). The browser's address bar shows 'lmcc.net'. The website header features the LMCC logo on the left, a 'DONATE' button, and social media icons for Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube on the right. Below the header is a navigation menu with the following items: ABOUT LMCC, ARTIST RESIDENCIES, ARTS SERVICES, GRANTS, PUBLIC PROGRAMMING, and SUPPORT US. The main content area is divided into two columns. The left column has a heading 'ARTISTS, AUDIENCES, and COMMUNITIES.' followed by a paragraph: '2013 marks LMCC's 40th anniversary year and we look forward to celebrating with you all year long and demonstrating our commitment to advancing artists, transforming audiences, and catalyzing communities.' Below this is a quote from Dance Magazine: 'The River To River Festival produces the kind of event that makes the Big Apple fun in the summer months. Lower Manhattan Cultural Council, which organizes the festival, is great at finding street corners, alleyways, and parks that you never thought were danceable.' The right column features a large image of a tree with a yellow banner that reads 'Manhattan Arts Grants'. Below the image is another yellow banner that says 'Connecting artists and audiences across Manhattan Applications for 2014 are open'.

Here is a screen shot of the local one for NY

Gigs and other Public Appearances

Every time you perform is both a membership and a marketing opportunity, so always try and perform like you were on the contest stage. Gigs are also fun, and a good way to boost your bottom line. Some popular places to find gigs in addition to good PR, website, and social media presence are:

Singing Valentines

Many chapters have a Singing Valentines program, but if you don't I strongly suggest one. This program hits on all cylinders for chapter health. It creates awareness, spreads the joy of barbershop harmony, adds significant revenue to the chapter, and helps members develop their quartetting skills. This is also one of your best opportunities for PR, newspapers and radio stations LOVE to showcase unique things you can do for your Valentine.

Parades

Every place has local parades and most are easy to get into. Some towns do require that the singers are on a float, and some chapters have invested in this and it has paid off. It's definitely something to look into to promote the chorus. You may even get paid.

Local Fairs

Fairs are a great place to create awareness. Take a booth (could be sponsored by your local arts council), and send some quartets wandering around the crowd.

Paid and Free Gigs

Gigs have so many benefits, even free ones. We all love to perform, and what better way than to have someone pay us to perform. Every performance a recruitment opportunity, an opportunity to build your fan base to sell tickets to, and also an important member retention tool. What good is rehearsing every week if you never perform.

Convention and Visitors Bureau

If you are near a large city, conventions are a wonderful place to get high paying gigs. Seek out the members of the convention bureau, send them tickets to your shows, send them a singing valentine. They need to be your evangelist.

Gigmasters

[_www.gigmasters.com](http://www.gigmasters.com)

Gigmasters is the most popular website for matching talent with those looking to hire talent. Well worth the price, but you need someone actively working with the leads. Pricing ranges from free to \$99 a month, but one gig more than pays for it.

Hotel Associations

Depending how large your area, you may have a association of hotels. Hotels can be a very lucrative place for gigs, especially at Christmas. If you don't have a association, contact the hotel management directly.

Meeting Planners

Get to know your local meeting planners, they generally hire the talent, make their clients happy and you will have a stream of lucrative gigs.

Local Service Clubs

Rotary, Elks and others have regular meetings, offer to sing at one. This is both a potential gold mine for members, but also for gigs.

Chamber of Commerce

Same with the chamber as service clubs, join the chamber, become a active part of your community. This investment will pay off.

Association of Executives

Again, go and sing for their meeting, these are corporate influencers, if they like what they hear they will find a way to hire you.

Newspaper Guild Picnics

What better place to do a pro bono gig than in front of hundreds of newspaper reporters. These are the guys who decides what gets written about, make friends, get to know your local reporters. Before you know it you'll be getting several articles written about you. Also, when they know and like you, your PR emails won't just go in the trash.

Newcomers Club

That new great singer just moved to town and is looking for a place to find new friends. This can pay dividends for years

Colleges

The music program at a local college is a great place to find young singers. Teach them a tag or 10. They will be hooked on the vocal harmony. Your next director may come from that program. Music teachers who will influence the next several generations may come from that program. You may even get some great singers out of it.

Cable public access

Cable providers are required by law to provide either free or minimal cost access to customers to those citizens and non profits that serve a local public interest. There are also educational access channels. You could create a music show, an a cappella show, a music education show. Get creative.

Show Marketing

Shows generally are a major income stream for the chorus and successful marketing is key to the success.

Flyers, posters, email your fan list, post to Facebook, create a Facebook event for the show and have your members invite their friends, good PR, and one on one. You guys know how to market a show. The key is making all of your communication effective and compelling. They should WANT to come to your show.

Some non traditional things to consider. How about offering a webcast so those who are to far way can still attend. Or while inviting them to the show, run a donation campaign at the same time. Can't attend the show, make a donation to the chapter, or buy a ticket for a broke college student.

Mailing Lists

Postal Mail

While costly to print flyers and mail them to past patrons, in certain demographics it still works. If this is your only method currently, you should start to transition to digital, and especially social.

Email your fan base

Email is a very effective way to stay in contact with your fans. To promote a show, another event, a fundraising campaign, or just to stay in touch. You can capture emails from your shows, especially if your are doing digital ticketing like using Eventbrite, or even selling tickets on your website and using Paypal. You also can have a opt-in opportunity on your website.

Here is a screen shot of Voices of Gotham's opt-in page.



support the chorus

Please fill in the form below to Subscribe to our mailing list.

The image shows a blue rectangular form for email subscription. It contains four input fields: 'Email Address: *', 'First Name:', 'Last Name:', and a 'Join Now' button at the bottom.

We will not share, sell, or otherwise abuse your email account.

You can expect no more than 10 emails per year from the chorus.



Facebook

Facebook is ultimately the easiest and best way to capture your fan base. If they move, or change email address, you still know how to get in contact with them.

Facebook also has a feature called events. You can create a event for your show and invite all of your fans- this should include your members, they should be inviting their friends as well. This also has a viral element, because when a fan says they are attending your show, that's shared with all of their friends, creating even greater awareness. Email and Facebook were the only methods for promoting the 75th anniversary webcast, and it was seen by well over 250,000 people (110,000 connections) so you can see the power.

Membership Drives

I know you are not the membership guy. But wait, membership is every members job, and as the VP of Marketing, you may be the second most important guy in Membership. The membership VP can't do his job effectively without your help. Every membership drive has at its heart great marketing.

Posters in coffee shops, train stations, bus terminals, and any place commuters congregate.

PR

Local advertising (radio, tv, web, newspaper)

Yard Signs

One of the most effective membership campaigns I've been involved with involved many of these, but at the heart of the campaign was the yard sign. Such a simple thing, yet so effective.

Chorus Phone

It's so important that it's easy for someone to contact the chorus. Facebook, email, phone all need to be monitored by some who responds quickly. This contact could just as easily be someone looking to hire the chorus, a potential new member, or someone from the press looking to do a article on the chorus.

There are a few choices that make it easy to have a virtual phone that redirects to a chorus member. Google offers Google Voice for free, there are also others services like Grasshopper. Check them all out and find the one that fits your needs.

Chorus Business Cards

It is important that the chorus have business cards, they should have, like your website and Facebook cover, a compelling picture of the guys enjoying themselves singing.

My favorite places to get cards are vistaprint.com and moo.com, moo has some really cool cards, I used their mini cards for my quartet. Moo also employs barbershoppers (found that out after I was a customer), so that's another reason to use them.

Every member should have at least one chorus business card on them at all times, I carry a stack of chorus and quartet cards, making sure I also have at least one each in my wallet, so if I'm in a place where I don't have my card case, I always have a card.

Marketing for Grants

Like membership, your grant people will also require good marketing pieces your grant application. Be sure to keep copies of your show posters, any media clippings, etc, to show your value and relevance to the community, as well as your professionalism.

Greeting Guests

Again, I know, that's a membership thing, but you didn't get to be VP of Marketing because you are shy and retreating. Make sure you greet every guest and make them feel welcome.

Ensuring They Return

You and the Membership VP have put in a lot of effort to get a prospective member in the door, do everything in your power to ensure they return. Keep in touch, make sure they enjoy themselves and feel included. Pick them up and bring them to rehearsal, stop and nothing.

PUBLIC RELATIONS, YOUR CHAPTER, THE MEDIA AND YOU!

Understanding the Old vs. The New Media Can be Helpful in Charting an Effective Promotional Course For Your Chapter

Now more than ever, people instantly want information they can use. What media will prevail in the upcoming years? No one really knows for sure! But one thing is for sure! Knowing your audience and how they get their attention will enable you to create the right message and get that message to the right "target" audience. We as public relations officers need to integrate both our "internal" and "external" public relations efforts in order to maximize results.

External Public Relations

Nearly 70% of the average American Adult uses one or more media source. 40% of the time we spend with media, we typically aren't doing anything else other than consuming information in all its different forms.

Television still remains the biggest media outlet in the home, while radio is the dominant medium in the car. The computer tends to be the dominant medium at work - Although as the workforce becomes more mobile, the computer and mobile technology in general is rapidly gaining dominance for people on the go. Conventional AM and FM radio, digital radio (Sirius/XM), magazines, newspapers, internet, i phone technology, social media and outlets such as YouTube are all viable resources for obtaining information.

The problem is that with a growing number of available outlets it becomes increasingly difficult to pinpoint a single resource that is used most often for information gathering activity. What's more, with all of this so-called media convergence coming into play, how do you navigate through all the daily clutter to get your message out! The answer involves developing a story that has relevance, some good timing, cultivating good media contacts and a certain degree of luck.

Let's face it...we've all been frustrated at one time or another because our chapter show or event didn't get the coverage it deserved or worse, got no coverage at all.

Aside from a breaking news story taking precedent and sidelining most other stories, one of the biggest reasons events and/or what we think are interesting stories don't get coverage is because they lack relevance.

Remember, public relations in its purest sense is all about creating news value or "relevance" to a particular event. If an editor or program director views what you send them as an attempt to get free advertising, your information will likely end up in the proverbial circular file! Therefore, it's up to us as PR people to create an angle to a particular story that will resonate well in a news context.

The truth is...it's no longer enough to simply send a press release by snail mail or e mail or to make a phone call to say you have a show or an event and you'd like to get some coverage.

First, keep in mind that you're competing with hundreds of other organizations who are vying for the same editorial space or air time that you are every day. Secondly, remember that the average television newscast is only one half hour and the average radio newscast is probably 2-3 minutes. Third, today's media in all forms is driven mostly by current events, so in order to get noticed, it's important to know the news of the day and find a way to tie your event in. In other words.. ride the horse in the direction it's going!

Granted...coverage of any event, barbershop or otherwise, is never guaranteed, but, there are ways to increase your chance for exposure.

Some Basic But Important Questions to Ask

- Are you familiar with all the media outlets in your area?
- Are you familiar with the types of stories and/or program formats that each outlet runs (i.e. Print, broadcast, online, etc.
- Do you know the person or persons in each of the media outlets in your area that would be likely to cover your chapter events.(i.e. Typically the entertainment editor or local news editor.)
- Would your story be of interest to at least 10% of a stations viewership/listenership or a publications readership?
- Is it timely??
- Does it include the names of people, especially any celebrities or other prominent people that would be immediately recognized by J.Q. Public?
- Does your story have a local angle??

A 9 STAGE ACTION PLAN

Stage 1- Ask these Questions:

Who is your Audience?

What Impression do you want to make on your audience?

What do you want your audience to do, if anything?? (i.e. buy tickets, book your chorus or quartet for an event, etc.)

What specific actions must be taken by the public to achieve goals and objectives??

Stage 2 – Know your Chapter and Our Society Inside and Out

Know your chapter history

When was your chapter founded??

Who founded it??

Why was it founded??

Who were/are the founding members??

What is the size of your chapter and what geographic area does it serve or would it like to serve??

What are some significant accomplishments/contributions??

Do you have any members who have received achievement awards or who may be well know in the community??

What is your group doing now?? Any current activities??

What are some future plans/long range goals??

Stage 3 – Lay Out a Plan

Does your chorus want to be a competition oriented group or is your chapter content to just perform within the community with less emphasis on competition.?

Look at the feasibility of both short and long-range goals. What is realistic and what is not??

Once having identified goals etc. put a team together and assign specific duties!
Put a budget together and decide where the funding will come from.
Brainstorming Sessions are always good and should be encouraged.
Keep good records so as to make life easier for your successor.

Stage 4 – Chart a clear and direct course

Know where you are going and how you intend to get there
Create a goal statement that is general, timeless and is determined by needs.

Stage 5 – Write Objectives

Write down specific steps to take to accomplish the desired outcome.
Ask questions like: how much publicity do we need??
How much time will be needed??
How much money will be needed??
Will it be an ongoing activity or will it be a one shot event??

Stage 6- Analyze your target audience

Demographic information
Psychographic information

Stage 7- Always try to stay in the Public Eye

Schedule press releases on a regular basis, with each release focusing on a different aspect of your chapter.

Stage 8 – Meet the Press

Introduce yourself – either in person, by e mail, phone or by letter.
Create a comprehensive media list complete with phone numbers, e-mail addresses and mailing addresses. (i.e. Print, Broadcast, Cable, Social Media such as Facebook, LinkedIn and all other outlets.)
Take a reporter to lunch...it could pay off in huge dividends!

Stage 9 – Develop a business contact network

Belong to and be active in community and business organizations.
Subscribe and submit articles or show notices to newsletters from these organizations (in many instances they're free)
Church bulletins and e- newsletters are always a good avenue to spread chapter news and recruit new members.

Always have business cards with you from your chapter in order to be prepared for those close encounters of the barbershop harmony kind!!

Tips for Good Media Relations

- Integrity- Don't exaggerate. Just tell it like it is!
- Immediacy- Don't delay in responding to a reporters inquiry and when you do, be honest in all responses.
- Accessibility –Try your best to accommodate all reasonable media requests. As the age old saying goes, "You never get a second chance to make a first impression."
- Deadlines – Meet all obligations and timelines
-
- Familiarity – Do your homework. Know what types of stories get published, what angles seem to resonate the best with your media and what reporters cover what beat. If you do a little extra research, the chance you will get exposure could dramatically increase.

As we discussed earlier, we live in an instant information age. So, in order to get the word out to the right audience at the right time, it's necessary to understand the messaging process.

The Four C's of Promotion:

- Content: The development of the idea and the way in which that idea can be presented
- Conduit: The promotional vehicles through which your creative idea is sent (Radio; TV; Print; Internet, mobile devices, etc)
- Consumption: How The target audience receives their information (i.e.(Radio; TV; Print; Internet, mobile devices, etc)
- Convergence: How all media formats work together to get the information out!

All of these Four C's need to be considered in order to maximize effectiveness!

Knowing & Targeting Your Audiences:

Demographics: Age, Race, gender, income, geography

Psychographics: Attitudes and Lifestyles and how that influences the approach to marketing and Public Relations

Understanding The Promotional and Media Mix:

Public Relations: PR gives a product or service news value. The most common

form of information distribution is by a press release, but interviews on Radio, TV or through Print Mediums (i.e. articles, etc.) are also useful. Such exposure is typically free, but not always guaranteed. It's often designed to build curiosity around a particular product or service. In our case..it's our chapters and quartets.

Advertising: Paid exposure to promote a product or service. Since it is paid, placement is guaranteed whether in Radio, TV, Print or the internet. Advertising typically reaches a large audience and is the best choice in contrast to Public Relations to build brand awareness and develop brand image.

Sales Promotion: Uses incentives or motivators to entice customers to use a particular product or service. Typical incentives can include coupons, rebates, samples, buy one get one free offers, Premium items such as T-Shirts, mugs, pens and calendars. Sales promotion works best for new product or service launches. The goal in using these sales promotion tactics is to get the consumer to try a product that they might not otherwise try.

Direct Marketing: Uses special offer and/or discount mailing pieces sent by zip code or targeted to specific demographics. Other means of Direct Marketing include catalogs, infomercials and telemarketing. Direct marketing provides avenues to speak to individuals on a one to one basis and creates an opportunity for an immediate response.

Internet and Viral Marketing: Spreading the message through the internet and having it catch on by multiplying the effect. (See the section on Social Media for more detailed information.

Guerilla Marketing: An unconventional approach to reaching a targeted audience using any printable surface on which to put a message such as sidewalks, cars, transportation vehicles, bathrooms, bus shelters. parking meters, shopping carts, etc. It's always important to evaluate the demographics, psychographics, geography of the target audience in order to determine whether or not this unconventional promotional style will be right for the target audience in question.

Personal Selling: This is selling a product or service one on one directly to the buyer. In other words, always take advantage of every opportunity to promote your chapter or quartet. You never know who might be interested. Try it... You'll like it!

Press Kits (print & electronic)

A press package is the foundation of any media relations program. It consists of a series of stories, usually placed in a two-sided folder with pockets, that organizes information in a way that is easy for the news media to use. Typically it will include a description of the organization, key facts and figures, biographies of the principals, a history, and two or three stories on current trends and issues. It functions as instant background material

when a story arises. Press packages usually include photography.

The opportunity to deliver a press kit instantly is a good reason for your chapter computer guru to add a press and/or media tab onto your website.

By creating this "Press/Media" section a reporter calls who perhaps wants a document, photograph, map or other information, he or she can simply go to your web site and access the desired information in a form that can be used immediately and with a minimum of additional work on your part.

When you have more details and facts and figures than can fit in a one-page press release, you need a Fact Sheet. It can be a one pager or several pages long and should include historical perspectives, anecdotes, and data.

It should be well written with short sentences and paragraphs and wide margins. This gives you the best of both: a short press release that quickly gives reporters and editors the essence of your story, and material to do an in-depth article. Include both a Society fact sheet and a chapter Fact Sheet

Develop Media Lists

The shotgun approach (sending your news to every outlet/broadcaster/publication in the country) is not the most effective way to reach your target audience.

Obtain the names and street addresses of publications, broadcast, cable and online sources are in your geographic area and know the person at all of these outlets who would be most likely to take an interest in your story.

Make a file for each source and include all contact information, such as e mail, phone numbers (i.e. land line and cell), the best time(s) to reach them and deadline information for any submissions.

Taking time to do a little research can produce greater results for your efforts. Know who you want to reach and know the format and medium that the media prefer. Delivering your story in the right format to the right media is more likely to ensure successful coverage.

Methods For Distributing Your Message:

Press Releases

These are usually the most valuable to the news media, and will help you establish a reputation as a source. These are about developing trends in your industry and contain information that would otherwise be difficult for the media to obtain. The following are examples of trend releases: What are the "hottest" spots in the Bay Area real estate market? Are more Americans traveling to Russia now and why? Are physicians gaining more clout in negotiating with insurance companies? Are major medical groups

paying more or less attention to holistic/alternative medical therapies?

Public Service Announcements (PSAs)

PSAs are among the most common types of publicity for non-profit organizations like the BHS.

Since they are short, broadcasters run a lot of them, especially if they have extra time to fill.

PSA's are likely to be repeated several times, thus giving your message multiple impact.

(A Helpful Timing Hint~ When writing any timed copy, PSA's or otherwise, a good rule of thumb to follow is 3-words per second)

The least expensive kind of PSA is "live" copy, where the announcer reads your material live. You may also submit pre-recorded material, if you have a production budget. Live copy to TV stations should include visual material (i.e. Logo's, chorus/quartet photos, etc.)

Important Note: Different media outlets typically have their own PSA submission guidelines, so it's always a good idea to find out in advance exactly what is required.

Feature Story Releases

Although a feature story must be newsworthy, in the broad sense of the word, it is also timeless. It can run in today's paper or tomorrow's or next week's. Feature stories are often called "evergreen" for this reason – it's always fresh and will not fade. Unlike a news story, a feature can have a point of view, an "angle", and is often longer than a hard news story on the same subject.

Wire Services

News agencies, often called wire services, such PR Wire, are also valuable in getting your message out to a wide geographic area. While these services can deliver your story to many newsrooms and related outlets, based on parameters you set, coverage is often too broad and can be expensive.

Nevertheless, it may be worth investigating. If you choose to go this route, always have a story that deals with a things your chapter has done in the community. Any kind of human interest story resonates well with reporters/ editors.

(Note: Wire services charge fees that are determined by the geographic coverage areas. While these services can be effective, c)

Webcasts

This is rapidly becoming a major publicity tool as people take advantage of the web's multimedia capabilities. Webcasts can be live events or archived and available on demand. They are a cost-effective, instantaneous method to communicate with media all over the world, in a compelling, interactive manner that meets journalists' needs.

Using Webcasts, you can extend the reach of your PR efforts, reduce your budget for spokespeople, ensure your message is communicated consistently across all audiences, better fit into journalists' schedules, and provide more compelling supporting elements.

Internet Monitoring

The web now offers an incredibly wide range of public forums, in addition to the traditional array of print and broadcast sources, for dissemination of news and information.

And of course social media in all its forms (i.e. facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, etc.) has taken on a life of its own.

Therefore, you as a chapter PR person, you should consider having a plan to monitor various media web sites, especially those of your local media outlets, as well as to see what's trending on facebook, etc. on a regular basis.

Doing so, will not only keep you in tune with current events, but may even help you to formulate some great PR angles in the process.

Train a Spokesperson

The media usually wants to speak to an authority in the field, not the public relations person. Chapter spokespersons should be immediately available and trained in how to work with the media.

Your role as the public relations person is to facilitate the selection and training of an appropriate and available expert.

Media people typically show up at an event, with little or no understanding about the event (such as a performance, annual show, etc.). So, it is extremely important to always have a press kit available and guide the media to the people who have been trained to give the right message. If you don't "Prep" the media with all the background and other details you want them to know, the resulting coverage may be disappointing.

Becoming a Source

One of the key strategies of a successful public relations plan should be to become a source when the news media is doing its own story. One achieves this by issuing regular, professionally written press releases to let

reporters know you are there and are available when they call. Calls must be returned within the hour — sooner if possible — seven days a week, 24 hours a day.

“Op-ed” Articles

"Op-ed" articles, so named because they typically run opposite the editorial page, are an excellent opportunity to comment on issues of the day and to build name recognition as an expert in the field. They run under the by-lines of experts, and give you a chance to state your case in your own words, with minimal editing by a reporter. Once published, they can be effectively used as reprints.

Letters to the Editor

Many papers try to publish as many Letters to the Editor as possible and they take these letters seriously. Make it short, concise and focused on a single point. This is also an effective venue for addressing a controversial issue, clarifying any misconceptions or inaccurate reporting about your business or product, or introducing a new product. But regardless of the purpose, it should never be more than 3-5 paragraphs.

Press Clipping Services (Optional)

You'll want to know if syndicates and wire services are picking up your story. That's where a subscription to a clipping service may help. These services scan thousands of newspapers, magazines, web sites and monitor television talk shows and news programs looking for mention of your chorus or quartet. You can also provide them with key words thereby keeping upto-date on your industry or competition.

Some smaller services still manually clip articles but most are Web-based services that scan electronic versions of publications and deliver your "clippings" in electronic form. In either case, having these clippings enables you to judge whether your news is reaching your target audience and if your PR plan is effective.

Note: There is typically a monthly charge connected with these services and it may not be worth the investment. Do the research to determine if this service is right for you! It may be easier to ask a chapter member or your chapter archivist to take on this responsibility.

“Riding” a News Story

When a topic on which you have expertise is in the news, it is important to issue a release immediately that includes a brief comment and a statement that you are available for interviews.

Special Events

Special events can be held to introduce new initiatives, bring attention to an organization or individual (such as within your chapter), make an announcement, or spotlight something very visual that cannot be communicated via a press release (such as a performance).

Keep in mind, as with any event the media attends, it is important to have background material – a one- page release, copies of statements made and related information available. Providing materials, promotional items such as pens, mugs, etc. and remembering to follow up after the event, will greatly increase your chances of getting the coverage you want!

Photography

A good photograph(s) will greatly increases the chance of publication. If photographs are not feasible, charts, diagrams, logo's or other graphics can be useful.

Photographs should be sent in digital formats. Press packages may include an actual color photo(s), but always check with your media source to determine their preferences. You can also make any photographs, images, logo's, etc. available via your Web site's press section.

Remember, all media outlets now have websites, so if you provide great visuals, you'll likely get in both the publication and on the web as well.

Byline or Feature Articles

A great way to get exposure for your chorus or quartet(s) is through articles. Byline articles by reporters can be used in a number of ways. Writing an article for a newspaper, magazine or online publication has a longer shelf life than that one edition. Reprints can be used in press kits, mailed to clients, available for downloading on your Web site, and given to media to establish expertise in a particular area.

The article should be timely and targeted. Usually it is wise to pitch the idea to a publication first.

If no one is interested in your idea there is likely a reason – it could be "old" or redundant, it may not fit the editorial calendar, or it may just not be newsworthy in the editor's mind.

A Word of Caution~ Don't spend time writing a story on your own. Simply provide the facts, because publications and/or broadcast outlets prefer to assign their own reporters to a particular story.

Newsletters

Another way to keep your strategic messages in front of your target audience is to communicate via a quarterly newsletter. A newsletter is an excellent place to recap the coverage you have received in the media. Not everyone in your target audience will have seen all the coverage your organization has received. When it is reviewed in its entirety the sum becomes greater than its parts. Newsletters can be either mailed or e-mailed to your contact list. It is important to build and maintain your database to achieve maximum effectiveness.

Community Calendar Listings

Community calendar listings are similar to PSAs – generally used by nonprofits and community organizations – except they usually promote an event rather than a cause or service. Businesses can sometimes be listed if the event is free or serves the public interest.

Public Relations Campaign Measurements

One way to create news is to conduct a survey and report the results. Surveys are most helpful when you can use numbers to make a before-and after comparison. They can be used to gauge the knowledge of your audience on your products or services or to determine the effectiveness of your PR campaign. In any case, they should always be short and specific. These days, surveys are not just limited to telephone or direct mail. Using the Internet to conduct a survey can provide quick feedback at minimal cost.

10 Low Budget Promotional Tips That Can Generate Some “Sizzle”

1) Partner with other organizations, such as sports teams, community theater groups, orchestra's, groups that offer food, shelter (like your local American Red Cross Chapter, Habitat for Humanity, etc.) to sponsor events.

Philanthropic efforts always attract media attention. While you're at it..also consider sharing e mail lists. That's a win-win scenario for everyone!

2) Who is your youngest and/or your oldest chapter member? If your youngest member is really young (i.e. Grammar school or Jr. High for instance) and your oldest member is say, in his 90's or approaching 100 yrs.young, that could be reason enough for the media to take note! (no pun intended!)

3) Are there members within your chapter that represent several generations of barbershop singing (i.e. fathers, sons, grandfathers, etc.)? If so, you likely have a story just waiting to be told.

4) Post “Tips on How To Improve Your Singing,” on your chapter website and promote those tips in any and all advertising and public relations that you do.

5) Create a great voicemail message. If your chapter has a dedicated telephone line, leave a unique message that will get people talking. Write a great script

with the points you want to make, put some barbershop music in the background and recruit a voice of your choosing within your chapter with lots of energy (or a professional voice if you have a budget) to record it and you're all set.

6) Use Your E Mail Signature to Your Advantage. Add a quote or maybe add a link to an article about your chapter. You can also use a link within your signature to promote an upcoming show. Whatever you decide to do, remember to include all contact information (land line, cell phone, etc.)

7) Use The Singing Valentine concept all year long! Make quartets available to sing for any occasion and design similar packages around a given event (i.e. birthdays, anniversaries, Mothers Day, weddings, etc.). It's sure to create tons of great exposure and generate some extra cash for your chapter in the process.

8) When the budget is low or maybe even non existent...consider bartering (i.e. trading) your singing services. Offer a printing shop a free ad, a performance or some show tickets in exchange for printing your program. Barter with a florist or a candy store to fulfill a singing quartet package mentioned above. The list is only limited to your imagination. Whether it's a complete trade (i.e. free) or half cash and half barter, you still come out on top.

9) Schedule chorus and/or quartet visits to schools of every level within your community. There's no better way to showcase our great hobby by performing in public. It's not only entertaining, but you may even spark some interest in setting up a formal Youth in Harmony program or pick up a few new members along the way.

10) Blog. It's a great way to share your thoughts and ideas. Best of all, you can instantly post comments on your chapter website. If you blog, be sure to keep the content fresh.

Press Release Basics!

Most press news releases are distributed by email, fax, to editors at newspapers, magazines, radio stations, television stations or through online distribution services, where your news gets syndicated to thousands of news sites worldwide.

Why Press Releases?

Press releases are used mainly for:

1. Announcement launch of New Events (like appearances, parties, prize give-aways, shows, etc.)

2. Business News and Corporate Announcements (announcement of new product, new company members, latest technologies)

3. Social and Government News (from social and public organizations, clubs)

Important Points to Remember:

- Ask yourself - "Is your news worthy?"
- Write the news for journalists and media NOT as articles or stories. Such posts will be rejected by media people.
- Make sure you post full contact address with phone without which your news release will lack credibility for journalists
- Keep it short with no more than 4-5 paragraphs in the body of release.
- Don't use promotional or marketing language.
- Pick an Attractive TITLE to catch attention of media persons.

Parts of Press Release

Title or Headline - The main title of the news. Always nice headlines easily attract attention of media persons. Start with phrases such as "unveils New Business Solution..."; "introduces new product...."; "boosts,"; "announces," etc.

Date & Place - contains the release date and originating city of the press release.
Example Miami,FL - 22 Aug 2006

Introduction - Highlight the the importance of the news in this paragraph. Usually contains three or four lines.

Body - further explanation, statistics, background, or other details relevant to the news. Give also some quotes from spokespersons.

Boilerplate - generally a short "about" section, providing independent background on the issuing company, organization, or individual.

Contact Information - name, phone number, email address, mailing address, or other contact information for the PR or other media relations contact person. Do not write email here.

Ending: ### indicates the end of press release, basically which refers to XXX meaning 30 used to denote end in telegraphic codes used in early years.

If your release is unique, interesting and newsworthy, you will be contacted by Print, TV, Radio or internet outlets for more information and/or an interview.

Sample Press Release Formats

[Your Logo Here]

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

[Short Title/Headline Here]

(Example: XYZ, Inc. announces launch of new website)

Description: (optional) This is a very short description about the press release. Many online PR distribution sites will ask for this.

[CITY], [STATE],[Date] – [This is the opening paragraph. It should contain about 3-5 lines and considered most important since this catches attention of news readers and journalists. Typically questions for questions of who, what, when, where and why answered here. Keep it short and highlight what's whole release is all about.]

[This paragraph goes into little depth. Give more details of product or any events taking place. This should contain about 2 comments made by spokespersons. For example, Mr. XXX said "xxxx". Quotes are Optional!]

[This paragraph focus on where users can find detailed information about product or events. Give a contact or website site for more information so that more additional information can be found. This paragraph should be concluded within 5-10 lines]

[The conclusive paragraph is known the "boilerplate" and should contain no more than 3-4 lines. A short "about" section, providing independent background on the issuing company, organization, or individual. Here you should explain future aspects, your or aim in meeting the current market or success. In general what you intend to do achieve.]

Contact Information: [Company Name]; [Address]; [Telephone]; [Website]
or -30-

(These marks let the reader know that it is the end of the release/article.)

NEWS ALERT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

(YOUR HEADLINE GOES HERE ~ MAKE IT CATCHY TO CAPTURE
ATTENTION OF THE EDITOR, PROGRAM DIRECTOR, ETC.)

WHEN: (Day, Date

WHERE:

TICKET PRICE: (IF APPLICABLE)

TICKET AVAILABILITY: (HOW AND WHERE CAN TICKETS BE
OBTAINED, IF APPLICABLE!)

PRESS/EVENT CONTACT: (NAME;PHONE NUMBER(S); E MAIL OF
PERSON FOR PRESS TO CONTACT ONLY!)

DETAILS

(Sample Copy)

Dozens of top regional quartets and choruses will compete at the 56th annual Mid-Atlantic District Contest of The Barbershop Harmony Society (BHS) - formerly, The Society for the Preservation and Encouragement of Barbershop Quartet Singing in America (SPEBSQSA). The event takes place on (Day, Date and Time)at (Location). Barbershop Harmony Society registered quartets and choruses will be judged and scored in separate contests for this years championship title. Winners will compete in the (Year) International Competition in (City & State plus Dates.)

The quartet competition starts (Day, Date, Time, etc.) The chorus competition begins (Day, Date, Time, etc.) A quartet finalist contest followed by a Jamboree featuring current and past champions will begin @ (Day, Date, Time, etc.).

Tickets are available to the public for the quartet finalist contest and Jamboree @ (Ticket Price/ea.) Bargain Priced all inclusive event “strip” tickets also available @ (website

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION :

(This background information gives context to your event).

The Mid Atlantic District is the largest of of seventeen nationwide of The Barbershop Harmony Society, with nearly 5,000 members representing nearly 100 chapters in Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York, Delaware, West Virginia, Virginia, North Carolina and Maryland. The respective winners in each district earn the right to compete with other district and worldwide champions in Philadelphia, PA, the site for The Society's next international convention / competition (Date, City, State, etc.).

Reigning district quartet and chorus champions are “Old School” and “The Alexandria Harmonizers”, respectively. The Barbershop Harmony Society (a.k.a. The Society for the Preservation and Encouragement of Barbershop Quartet Singing in America (SPEBSQSA), is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization. It was founded in Tulsa Oklahoma in 1938 by tax attorney O.C. Cash and Rupert Hall and is the world’s largest men’s singing organization with more than 28,000 members throughout the United States and Canada representing more than eight hundred chapters and one thousand registered quartets. International affiliates exist in Great Britain, Ireland, The Netherlands, Sweden, South Africa, Germany, Australia, New Zealand and elsewhere.

For Press related information, promotion and/or interview scheduling for this event, please contact (Name of Contact Person) @ (Land Line and Cell Numbers.)

IMPORTANT NOTE- If the contact number for J.Q. Public is different from the number(s) you give to the Press, make sure you distinguish which number is which by saying : For Press Contact ONLY and not for general publication.

THE VALUE OF INTERNAL PUBLIC RELATIONS

Internal Public Relations is just as important as external public relations. We have public relations people who can create just as much enthusiasm within our chapters as we can telling the outside world about our hobby.

Here are Five Basic Steps to Improve Your Internal Public Relations Efforts

- 1) Be a Good Listener~ Be curious and get to know each member within your chapter as not only a fellow barbershopper, but for the accomplishments they have achieved within their community. By taking time to listen, you'll get a better sense of member "Likes" and "Dislikes," and how their expertise can add overall value and take your chapter to new heights.
- 2) Share Information~ Letting your members know what you're doing on the outside in terms of "external" PR, can create loads of enthusiasm within. Good information, just like money, needs to circulate. The more it circulates the more its value increases.
- 3) Collaborate ~ Good PR, like anything else is the result of ongoing collaboration. Therefore, make a conscious effort to consult with other chapter officers to get their views and input. By doing so, you'll build tons of goodwill and get the idea mill churning for future chapter activities, too!
- 4) Learn~ Be willing to learn from others around you. See what other chapters and other organizations, perhaps unrelated to barbershopping have done and determine what's worked and hasn't worked for them. By doing so, you'll be in a much better position to chart a course for the future.
- 5) Repeat~ The PR business is an endless cycle. Whether it's internal or external public relations, it's important to repeat the process of listening, sharing, collaborating, learning and repeating on an ongoing basis in order to get optimum results