

**“THE INVITATION LIST & SEATING PLAN”**

Developing a Time-line for Program Promotion

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- Advertising is essential!
- It can be difficult to get participants to enroll in a new program
  - Especially ag producers, they're very busy!
- As the host of a program, you should advertise BEFORE the course, as well as AFTER the course to thank any presenters, sponsors, and participants
  - Why after? If you advertise the success of your programs, people are more likely to enroll in the next program or other upcoming programs you host.
- Advertising is one of the biggest challenges in today's world. So, how do we beat it?
- **START BY HAVING A WELL-LAID OUT MEDIA PLAN TO REACH YOUR TARGET AUDIENCE!**

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**WHO DO I INVITE?**

- Ask yourself: where do I get my invitation list?
- When you threw a party – how did you go about inviting people?
  - You probably started by inviting close friends and family, aka people you know who are close to you.
- After your friends and family, what did you do next?
  - You may have called your family and asked who to invite, including all those other family members you haven't seen in years or other acquaintances you didn't know would like to attend



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**LAYING THE GROUNDWORK**

- Advertising Motto: Don't Reinvent the Wheel!
- If you have done other programming or a colleague has, all the information you need may be at your fingertips. Work from what you already have, learn from your mistakes, or both.
- Being in an Extension office, we are already in good position to advertise because many of the media contacts are well established
- We also have ongoing relationships with agricultural professionals, and we have an Extension network across the region and State
- Building a contact list takes effort
  - Make that effort pay by recording it in a database or spreadsheet or Eventbrite, or anyway that allows you to sort the information in a variety of ways
  - That way, you can use the contact list repeatedly



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**EXAMPLES OF GOOD CONTACTS & ORGANIZATIONS**

- County Extension Offices
  - Be sure to include all agents, county director, and admin in the office
- Extension Advisory Committee Members/Council Members
  - They always like to see what programs are going on and they may be able to distribute your program information, as well
- Farm Service Agency County Directors and Farm Loan Officers
- Ag Lenders
  - Brent and I have an ag lenders list serv of lenders in the state, tare the biggest promotor of our programs
- Farm Bureau Offices
- Commodity Organizations



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**EXAMPLES OF GOOD CONTACTS & ORGANIZATIONS**

- Newspapers
  - Find who a good contact is at the newspaper office to work with who understands Extension
- Radio Stations
  - Most producers always have a local radio station in their work pickup, and a lot of radio stations have an ag related radio show/program
- Conservation Districts
- Agricultural producers
  - If possible, collect data or indicate past programs attended to be able to identify and sore producers in your list
    - Ex. Some programs will be only applicable to livestock producers in the southwest area of the state
    - Eventbrite can help drastically with this



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**'FREE' ADVERTISING**

**Press Release**

- Local newspapers print press releases for free
- Send them the press release via email body and in an attachment so they can cut and paste easily
- Don't forget to include a cover page

**Flyers / Brochures**

- Printing and hanging flyers is not totally free, but emailing them certainly is.
- Most ag business offer space to hang flyers for free
- The Co-op, the feed store, Murdochs, Tractor Supply Co., the John Deere dealership, etc.
- Banks are a great place to hang flyers, and ag lenders certainly support Extension programming
- Make sure to design an eye appealing flyer that catches your eye and entices readership
- Remember not everyone has the program it was designed in, so send it as a PDF always

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**'FREE' ADVERTISING**

**Email lists**

- Adminbb, Regional listservs available for each region

**Public Radio Stations**

- Some radio stations do news releases or have ag programs

**Phone calls**

- It never hurts to reach out to someone with a personal phone call and explain your program and ask them to help spread the word

**Website/Social Media**

- Most counties have a great website platform and also have social media accounts to post to if you don't have your own accounts or websites

**Other**

- Think of some other free sources of advertising you may use or have used previously

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**EXAMPLE**

Cover Letter

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 [Name of Participant or Neighbor]  
 [Name of County or Extension office]  
 [Address]  
 [City, State, Zip]  
 Dear [Name of Name]:  
 [Name of Extension] would like to request the following information under the [Name of Extension website link]. Please help us provide [Name of Program] as you are available within.  
 You are requesting that your address/location information will be requested in regards to [Name of Program] and other agricultural programs. They will be placed in a confidential form with the information.  
 If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at [Phone number]. I am providing you with a variety of options on the information.  
 Thank you for helping [Name of Extension] better serve the citizens of [Extension or region].  
 [Name]

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# EXAMPLE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
Date: 10/26/21, 10:30am

**[Farm/ Ranch] Women are Decision Makers – Annie's Project Prepares Them Well**

Farm and ranch women are generating a cultural tide in American agriculture that is moving management, assets and opportunities to a new wave of farmers across the country. At Annie's Project course, farm women become empowered to be better business partners or sole operators through networks and by managing and acquiring critical information.

Annie's Project is a 3-day course that is a discussion-based workshop bringing women together to learn from experts in production, financial management, human resources, marketing and the legal field. Their priority of time for questions, sharing, meeting and connecting with producers and fellow participants. It's a relaxed, fun and dynamic way to learn, grow and meet other [farm/ranch] women.

Whether new or experienced, understanding the five areas of agricultural risk, knowing how to analyze agricultural spreadsheets and other necessary skills are vital. Learning them in a friendly environment where questions and discussions are welcomed, allow the learning process to flourish.

Annie's Project courses have successfully reached more than 9,000 farm and ranch women in 33 states. The next one in your area begins on 10/26 in CO. State (include state only in areas where you are a state law and not periodic for release or another state).

The cost for the course is \$750 per person, which includes a workbook and support materials for all sessions. (A light supper will be served before each class at 6:00 p.m.) Course size is limited, so please register soon.

Like all, Annie's Project alumni say, "I took the class to gain a better understanding about agriculture and how financial decisions impact our farm operations. I have a better understanding of balance sheets and the future market... this class has improved communication with my spouse on concerns he needs to be made with one daily basis."

For more information contact [Name Smith, Jefferson County Extension Coordinator] at [303] 435-1000 or [personnel@anniesproject.org]. Online registration is available at [www.anniesproject.org] or by calling [303] 435-1000. This course has already been fully covered and will continue to be covered by [Name Smith]. More information can be found on the Annie's Project website at www.anniesproject.org.

Press Release

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## PAID ADVERTISING

- All paid advertising should be used at your discretion!
- Newspapers
  - Ask if the paper has a non-profit rate
  - Ask if they offer specials, or any agricultural discounts
  - Be sure to know when the ad will run and what days your target audience is likely to read
- Radio Stations
  - Ask for a non-profit rate
  - Be sure and request to read the commercial before airing
  - Keep in mind that ads need to be heard about five or more times to reach the hearer



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## ADVERTISING AFTER OR FOR THE NEXT PROGRAM

- \*Note: These are suggested options
- Use the opportunity to take photos of your programs
- Inform the participants that you will be doing so.
- Quotes and comments from the participants are very helpful as well
  - Listen closely to discussion and jot things down, if you can.
- Send thank you letters / emails to speakers, sponsors, etc.
  - Include any pictures you took of them presenting or of the group.
  - This shows you were using sponsor money efficiently and dedicated to your program.
- Put together a slide show / memo for your advisory committee or supervisors
- Use pictures and quotes in future brochures

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### ADVERTISING TIMELINE

- Six weeks prior
  - Send the brochure to your email list
  - Talk to your contacts at the local radio station
  - Ask about donated time for advertising space or a reduced rate. Also ask about scheduling a radio interview. Schedule this to be two weeks prior to the beginning of the program
- Four weeks prior
  - Depending on your budget, start advertising in the local newspaper and the radio stations. Be sure to ask if you can add the program to any community calendars available
  - Hand out flyers and post them at entry points and businesses throughout the community
- Three weeks prior
  - Send out a cover letter and news release to the local newspapers. Ask them to print it within the next week. Don't overlook digital media and online newspaper ads

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### ADVERTISING TIMELINE

- Two weeks prior
  - Resend brochure to email lists
  - Make personal phone calls to stakeholders and / or potential participants
  - Record the radio interview to play as soon as possible (if applicable)
- Other tips:
  - Always be willing to answer questions about your program
  - Be a good promoter of others programs, too
  - Always keep your eye out for new, innovative places to advertise, or new contacts to help you advertise
  - Ask for an email introduction to contacts from your colleagues




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PLEASE RECORD ANY QUESTIONS

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