
MWR MANAGERS' OPERATIONS GUIDE

Develop a Marketing Plan and Message

DO THIS TASK WHEN

- You want to increase awareness of the benefits that your customers and others derive from FFR and your Program.
- You want to communicate how vital and critical FFR Programs are to the quality of life for the Navy community.
- You want to introduce a new FFR Program activity, event, product, or service, or you want to publicize changes to one or more of those activities, events, products, or services.
- You want to publicize information about your Program's facility and operations (e.g., hours/days of operation, closures, renovations, ribbon cuttings, etc.) or your holiday, seasonal, or special activities, events, products, and/or services.
- You want to publicize data/information from surveys and trends.

REFERENCES

- CNICINST 1710.3, Operation of Morale, Welfare and Recreation Programs.
 - DODI 1015.10, Military Morale, Welfare, and Recreation (MWR) Programs.
 - SECNAVINST 5720.44C, Department of the Navy Public Affairs Policy and Regulations.
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**SUPPLIES/
RESOURCES**

- Base or region marketing office
 - Basic office supplies, including a computer and phone
 - Base or region public affairs office
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**THIS TASK
IS DONE
CORRECTLY
WHEN**

- Customers are able to make informed decisions about your Programs' activities, events, products, and services.
 - The benefits of your Program and FFR are effectively communicated to your customers and various groups which ultimately aid in building program strength, and commitment, loyalty, and "buy-in" by your customers, key decision makers, and the command.
 - Your customers are informed of facility and operations schedules, changes, interruptions and cancellations caused by hours of operations, facility closures, renovations, ribbon cuttings, etc.
 - Applicable information from surveys, industry trends, etc., which support your Program are effectively publicized to appropriate customers and customer groups.
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NOTES

Getting the word out about your Program is critical to your success. The timeliness, accuracy, method of presentation, the appearance, and the information itself are essential to getting your customers to respond positively.

In general, FFR does a pretty good job of keeping people informed. With support from their installation marketing teams, many FFR Program's produce very high quality publications and online tools.

However, simply getting the word out may not be enough. It's what is being said (or more importantly, read) that will truly make a difference.

More specifically, your success depends on your ability to tell a compelling story – one that paints a clear picture of the value and benefits of FFR.

We often think in terms of outputs when we program our activities, events, products and services. We publicize the buffet, the youth center lock-in, the golf tournament, the fitness center, etc. And that is all well and good – people DO need to know the who, what, where, when and why.

But people make choices on how they spend their leisure time and money based on the benefits of participation – the idea of, “what's in it for me?”

When working with your installation (or regional) marketing team to promote your program, it is essential to develop a marketing plan. The plan should include key messages and list various channels to deliver those messages. And it should clearly define your outreach objectives – how will you measure success of your marketing efforts?

It is best to involve your staff, as well as other colleagues and leadership, when determining how to communicate the many benefits your Program offers.

Not only should you publicize the benefits to your customers, you should seek opportunities to promote how your Program benefits the command, the local community, the public, and the Navy.

As an example, the values and benefits of participating in the “Youth Center Lock-In” can be presented like the following:

- Individual Benefits:
 - Meet friends
 - Eliminate boredom
 - Build self-esteem
 - Learn new skills

**NOTES
(cont.)**

- Command Benefits:
 - Provides a safe place for children to play
 - Increases program revenue
 - Educates children and parents

- Local and Navy Community, Societal, and Environmental Benefits:
 - Reduces crime
 - Strengthens neighborhoods
 - Keeps kids in a safe environment
 - Decreases vandalism
 - Improves the public image

After identifying key messages, your marketing team can help you develop a multi-faceted marketing plan that identifies target audiences, considers the current landscape, and includes cross-promotional ideas. The plan should have a clear list of tactics and delivery dates.

Your public affairs officer (PAO) can help you tell the FFR story and market your good news features to local media. As a communications professional, the PAO can also assist you in telling your story Navywide by using Navy internal media. Keep your PAO in the loop and he/she will keep your FFR Program in the spotlight!

PROCEDURE

DEVELOPING A PUBLICITY/PROMOTION PLAN

Step 1 Brainstorm your marketing goals and needs.

- Review the lists of communication methods from Identify Customer Communications Systems. Remind yourself of those communication methods you presently use in your Program and those that you plan to start using to disseminate information.
- Review the current landscape by asking, “What are people saying about our Program?” Consider what your customers’ hot-button issues might be (whether positive or negative).
- Review ways to improve/expand communication methods.

NOTE: Address the effectiveness of each communication method you currently use.

Consider the following:

- Timeliness?
- Attractive, eye-catching presentations?
- Distribution points and methods?
- Information accurately conveyed?
- Reaching target customers/customers?
- Ease of preparation?
- Ease of distribution?

Step 2 Establish a meeting with your installation (or regional, as applicable) marketing team to discuss a marketing plan.

During the meeting, be sure to discuss:

- What are your key messages? Consider hot-button issues, and discuss the perception you'd like customers to have of your Program. Remember to list the individual, command and community benefits provided by your Program.
- Who are your target audiences? List those groups in order of priority.
- What assumptions can you make about your audiences? For example, do you work at a joint-services installation, and do you need to communicate differently to your customers? Is your installation small, and how does its size affect your marketing methods? Consider how these "givens" influence your outreach.
- What should your marketing objectives be? Set reasonable expectations based on workload, timelines and budget.

NOTE: Be as specific as possible when writing your goals. Make sure they are realistic and measurable.

- Examples:**
- (1) To expand participation of base intramural sports program to include co-ed and civilian participation in at least one new league in each major sport.
 - (2) To communicate how vital and critical the Youth Program is to the quality of life of the children and families residing in base housing.
 - (3) To gain command support of the Youth Program by obtaining the full, authorized share of APF each fiscal year.
 - (4) To increase participation in the youth sports programs by 25%.

Step 3 Work with your marketing team to draft a marketing plan. List specific tactics to accomplish your objectives.

- Consult a calendar and consider how other special events align with your tactics. For example, is Month of the Military Child a good time to share new messaging or promotional materials about your Youth Program? Should you avoid launching a new promotional item during the holidays, when few people are on base?
- Consider opportunities for cross promotion with other FFR or quality of life programs. For example, the release of a highly anticipated new film could be an opportunity to increase traffic at the dining facility near the base theater. Identify ways that various FFR Programs can complement each other.

Example Tactics:

- Produce a videotape using footage of various intramural sports competitions to show at base-wide meetings by Feb. 20.
- Meet with base and tenant command ombudsmen to prepare brochures for family and youth summer programs by April 10.
- Employ marketing staff and hobbyist photographers to take pictures of selected activities and events to create a photo board for display in selected facilities on base and update each quarter.
- Write a minimum of two news/press releases each week for publication in the Hornet Gazette and the Desert Star newspaper.
- Construct mailing list for direct mail of monthly program calendar within two weeks.
- Update the Youth Program section of the FFR homepage with photos, interviews, testimonials and upcoming activity and event schedules bi-weekly.

Step 4 Assign/coordinate responsibilities to perform each of the tactics.

Step 5 Determine the budget necessary to accomplish the overall plan.

Step 6 Prepare a timeline for the implementation of the plan.

- When will you begin your publicity/promotion?
- What are the significant milestones in the course of the plan?

- When do you need to complete the plan?

Step 7 Coordinate with your PAO. Share the draft marketing plan and identify any PAO tactics that can be included in the plan, or can complement marketing efforts.

PAO tactics might include:

- Local media outreach
- Base newspaper articles
- Social media posts
- Plan of the Day notes
- Navy NewsStand articles
- Navy community outreach articles
- Command leadership talking points

See [Coordinate with Public Affairs](#) for more information.



Congratulations! You've completed this task.