



## Marketing Your Non-profit Organization or Event

Many smart event marketers are doing less of the standard event tactics and more with a variety of exciting outside media—finding it greatly increases their event reach. You too can be seen in unique, unexpected and spectacular ways that your competition will envy as you “wow” your audience.

Be the first to reach conference attendees as they arrive in a host city. Use local billboards, hotel marquees, conference center billboards and local media. Use local television stations and radio stations to announce your upcoming event.

Continue the dialogue with attendees after they leave the conference via e-mail surveys, “thank you for attending” notes, or follow-up information such as speaker online handouts.

### BASIC STEPS TO MARKETING

For those of us in early care and education, marketing can be a unfamiliar concept. It is important as an organization that we understand marketing is much more complex than soliciting a donation or making a sale. Our first obligation is to satisfy our consumer and donor needs, which in our case is our membership. With limited budgets and resources where do we begin? Laura Lake, in her article, *Eight Basic Steps to Marketing Your Nonprofit Organization*, offers the following suggestions.

1. **Know your market.** Who are your members, what are their demographics? Ask them their needs and desires for the organization. Check out your competition...what are other organizations and associations

doing?

2. **Determine the desired outcome of your marketing efforts.** Are you trying to recruit more members, raise awareness of your organization, promote a specific event?
3. **Develop marketing materials.** Based on the ideas generated in steps one and two, develop brochures and informational materials that clearly describe the benefits, services, opportunities and value of your organization. Members have to know what value they receive for becoming a member.
4. **Develop a social media marketing strategy.** Twitter and Facebook allow you to reach people effectively at a low cost.
5. **Create an internet marketing presence.** A website allows you to post information, events and newsletters.
6. **Research and maintain your prospective and current membership databases.** This information can be used in various ways such as developing special mail lists, event invitations, alliance development, etc.
7. **Post and advertise the results and objectives that you achieve as an organization.**
8. **Continue to actively seek opportunities for collaboration and alliances.**

Source: <http://marketing.about.com/cs/nonprofitmrktg/a/8stepnonprofit.htm>

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### Leadership Commission Members

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- *Susan Carrigan, OK*
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# Creating a Professional Brand: A Marketing Tool

Exploring brand marketing concepts is a great way to fine-tune your business model and business practices, but **do you know what “branding” is and why it’s important?**

The American Marketing Association (AMA) defines a brand as a “name, term, sign, symbol or design, or a combination of them intended to identify the goods and services of one seller or group of sellers and to differentiate them from those of other sellers.”

A strong brand is invaluable as the battle for customers/members intensifies day by day. It’s important to spend time investing in researching, defining and building your brand.

A good brand will:

- “Deliver the message clearly.

- Confirm your credibility.
- Connect your target members emotionally.
- Motivate the prospective member.
- Concrete member loyalty.”

“To succeed in branding, you must understand the needs and wants of your members and prospects. You do this by integrating your brand strategies through your association at every point of contact.”

Source: *What is Branding and How Important Is It to Your Marketing Strategy?*,

<http://marketing.about.com/cs/brandmktg/a/whatisbranding.htm>

Exploring brand marketing concepts is a great way to fine-tune your business model and business

practices. It’s important to spend time investing in researching, defining and building your brand. After all, your brand is the source of a promise to your membership.

**DON’T SLACK OFF!** Building your brand isn’t a one shot deal. It takes time to build a solid presence and should be an ongoing endeavor. Stay in touch with your membership, build and maintain your network and work on your branding on a regular basis.

Source: *How to Create a Professional Brand*, <http://jobsearch.about.com/od/careeradviceresources/a/profbrand.htm>

**Does SECA’s “brand” tell you who we are?**

Southern Early Childhood Association



## Some Tools to Help You “Brand” Your Association

You’ve defined your brand and you’ve done the research, but what steps do you need to take to successfully implement your brand strategy? These resources will help in not only defining what your strategy and objectives are, but they will help you in the implementation process.

- **Networking Sites**—There are various networking sites such as JibberJobber, LinkedIn, and VisualCV that provide networking opportunities with other professionals and organiza-

tions. These networking opportunities all increase your visibility.

- **Blogging**—A well-written blog focused on your area of expertise is a good tool to include in your professional branding package.
- **Create a Presence**—Comment on other people’s blogs, write some articles, present at conferences, connect with other organizations. Be sure that all your endeavors

are focused and relevant to both your skills and your association’s goals.

- **Build a Web Site**—Showcase your association on the Web. It’s quick and easy to build a site with many of the tools out there.
- **Get Your Name Out There**—Try to meet, either in person or on-line, the important people in your field. Source: *How to Create a Professional Brand*, <http://jobsearch.about.com/od/careeradviceresources/a/>

# Getting Your Name Out There

One of the most common ways of "getting your name out there" is the old tried and true press release; however, how it's put together in this day of digital media has changed.

The old format no longer applies and many media outlets no longer accept press releases through old formats, such as fax.

According to Guy Bergstrom in his article, *How to Write a Press Release*, about 99% of press releases don't get used. Many journalists will kill it on sight because it's not something that grabs their attention. "*You have maybe five seconds to get a journalist's attention. They swim in a sea of e-mail, wading through hundreds of press releases every day. Why make them scroll past junk to find your headline and story? It only annoys them into hitting DELETE.*"

## The Three Biggest Mistakes

**The press release follows the old standard format**, beginning with FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE and contact information. This information is boring and makes a journalist more likely to delete the message.

**The headline of the release doesn't grab your attention.**

Which headline would grab your attention....

**"CEO of BigCo celebrates fourth quarter earnings report that**

**beats Wall Street expectations by 4 cents a share OR Got junk? New local business wants it." ?**

**The release is too wordy and doesn't get to the point quickly.**

The old standard was 500 words or less but the more simple and concise you make it, the more likely it is to be read.

## Some Tips for Writing a Successful Press Release

If you want to put together a successful press release (maybe about your annual conference, your events around Week of the Young Child or an advocacy position that you've taken), here are some tips from Bergstrom.

1. **"Your headline has to sing**, and it should fit the subject line of your e-mail. Try for eight words, max, and you'll avoid a double-decker sandwich of blah."
2. Unless you want your release held (embargoed) until a later date, **don't worry about putting FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE.** E-mail systems automatically date stamp messages
3. **Put the contact info at the end of the message.** Include the name of the contact person who can answer questions, a phone number and e-mail address.....That's enough.

4. **Keep the body of the release simple**, concise and as short as possible. Hone your writing skills by learning to pare down the information you share while making sure that all vital points are covered. (This is critically important with advocacy writing as well.) If you're putting more than one paragraph in the release, put the most important information first.

5. **"Photos are your secret weapon."** If you have photos to go with the information that you're sending, make them available to the journalist. It's not necessary to include all the actual photos as attachments to the e-mail but make sure there's a link to the photos (maybe available on your website?) and a description of the photos that are available. If you're going to include a photo, include the best, most attractive one that you have available.

6. **Send it to a person, not to the media outlet.** You'll have more success if you've cultivated a contact before you issue the press release, and they know you and what your issue is likely to be. For early childhood education, the journalists that cover education and human services are the most likely contact. Do your homework! Source: *How to Write a Press Release*, <http://marketing.about.com/od/publicrelation1@howtowritepr.htm>.

## Some Resources For Non-Profit Boards

Looking for interesting reading? The following articles are currently posted on the Blue Avocado website.

- *Blue Ribbon Nominating Committees*, Masaoka, 4-18-11, <http://www.blueavocado.org/content/blue-ribbon-nominating-committee-your-board>
- *Strategic Planning: Failures and Alternatives*, Masaoka, 3-15-11, <http://www.blueavocado.org/content/strategic-planning-failures-and-alternatives>
- *Raise Money in 30 Days*, Masaoka & Keegan, 7-24-10, <http://www.blueavocado.org/content/raise-money-30-days>





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*Promoting Quality Care and Education for  
Young Children and Their Families*

*The Southern Early Childhood Association (SECA) is a regional organization committed to promoting quality care and education for young children and their families. SECA is committed to providing leadership and support to individuals and groups by:*

- *Enhancing the quality of young children's lives through early childhood care and education.*
- *Supporting families in their roles of caring for their children.*
- *Fostering the professional growth and status of individuals working with young children and their families.*

*SECA is a "Voice for Southern Children"*

[www.southernearlychildhood.org](http://www.southernearlychildhood.org)

## Students: What Does Your State Offer Them?

Students are the members of the future for our Associations, and SECA is looking at how to provide programs and benefits that appeal to a new generation of early childhood professionals.

In 2011, we conducted an Affiliate Leadership Survey prior to the annual conference and asked states what type of events they were hosting/sponsoring specifically for students.

States responded that they:

- Schedule poster sessions at the state's annual conference.
- Schedule events and activities especially for students at conference.
- Fund student projects.
- Host meetings on local campuses and provide a meal for the stu-

dents who attend.

- Invite students to attend Association Board meetings.
- Ask Board members to visit and speak at meetings of local chapters and student groups.
- Offer a student discount on all of their teacher trainings.
- Offer a special student membership rate.
- Encourage students to serve as volunteers and hostesses at the state's annual conference.
- Provide student scholarships to the state conference.
- Sponsor workshops 3-4 times per year just for students. *Source:*

*Affiliate Leadership Survey, 2011*



SECA also offers special programs for students at our annual conference and in 2011, our keynote, Don Monopoli, provided a special performance for our student attendees.

We also offer a matching grant program for student groups to help them get to conference. For many of the students, this will be their first "professional" experience in the field and we want to make it available to as many as possible. The grant program matches funds raised by the students up to a maximum of \$1000 per group. **The application form for the 2012 conference will be available on the conference page of the SECA website by June 1, 2011.**