Marketing Your Chapter by Understand the Four Marketing Principles

Marketing VP is a Leadership Position

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VP of M/PR is a Leadership Position

By Greg Kronlund AIB

I've discovered that most VPs of M/PR are reactive in their position rather than proactive. They wait for the Show Chair to tell them the product the price and the promotion.

Instead, I believe, they should be proactive. The VP M/PR answers to the board and is a voting board member. In my eyes that is a leadership position, and the VP M/PR is responsible to advise each "department" how best to approach their assigned activity.

The VP of M/PR handles **internal** and **external** marketing plus **public relations**. If you spend time learning and developing the 4 P's, why would you not be proactive for the financial improvement of the chapter.

To carry out the VP role, you need to build a **strong relationship** with every member of the chapter and work closely with all "department heads." You are an advisor to all event committee chairpersons.

Here's some **relationships to nurture** to make your job more successful, and lighten your load:

Internal Marketing:

President, Director, Secretary, Treasurer, Music VP, VP of Communications, VP of Membership, and Section Leaders are your main source of advertising (promotion) on upcoming singing events and fund raisers. Yes, the VP of M/PR is responsible to market (The Four P's) to the chapter at large. This can be overwhelming, but a good leader knows how to find trusted talent to appoint.

External Marketing:

Membership at Large (Word of Mouth advertising)**,** VP of Communications, VP of Membership, Event Chairs, President, Treasurer, Secretary, Director, and Music VP.

Public Relations:

Local TV, Radio, Newspaper, Nickel Papers, Periodicals, City/County Tourist Groups, Civic and Charitable Organizations, Hotel/Motel Hospitality Organizations, City Officials, and Event Calendar Editors, plus online platforms.

If your chapter is set up with “departments” the VP of M/PR should have access to all departments and be a ready and willing adviser. The board should encourage all their VPs to take an active part in all marketing decision. I know this sounds like a lot but the more involved the VP of M/PR is within the organization the more successful each event will be.

An Influencer

As the **VP of M/PR** you are a leader and, in a position, to be a strong influencer of your chapter. There are certain duties needed from the chapter executives. If you realize how big your job is, understand the importance of working in advance, and your need for cooperative planning, your job of chapter influencer becomes even more important.

For instance, you know the chapter has certain events every year. Which means you’ll be planning for **Singing Valentines**, **Annual Show**, **Christmas Show**, (external marketing) plus **Division** and **District Convention** (internal marketing).

What could you possible influence? First, encourage the President to appoint committee heads at the beginning of the year. These appointments would be **Nominating Committee** (internal marketing) **Annual Show** chair, **Singing Valentine** chair, and **Christmas Show** chair (external marketing).

Encourage the show chairs to begin work as soon as possible. Encourage the **VP of Music and Performance** to work on show themes for the next three or four years. Encourage the **Valentines committee** to begin its work in October, building quartets and working on delivery organization. The sooner you can get these sub-committees functioning the easier your job will be.

The challenging work of marketing comes at the beginning of the project. The next step is to execute your plan.

It’s easy to see that a delay in the project, creates a delay in planning, which creates a delay in your action plan, and delays your ability to address unplanned issues. Your plan goes right out the window.

Encourage sub-committee chairs and committee members to be a part of the marketing of their event. They should work closely with the **VP of M/PR** as they prepare their plans. Each committee should appointment a liaison to report to the **Marketing VP** for brainstorming, and consultation.

Influencing chapter leadership, comes with a bonus! The board begins to see how marketing affects the chapter both practically and financial. If you have your plans and people in place, you have time to look for opportunities that will expand your visibility and community impact.

VP M/PR is in the Shipbuilding Business Essay

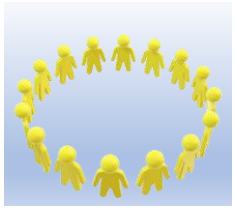
As VP M/PR you are a shipbuilder. **Salesmanship**, **showmanship**, **sponsorship**, and **relationship**. You are in contact with all aspects of your chapters culture, expectations, dreams, and plans. Not to mention your chapters financial health. The better shipbuilder you are the more you will build a circle of members that will help you complete your mission.

How many chapters find a chorus member that is a former salesperson, newspaper employee, television employee, digital tech, and decide there's the perfect **VP of M/PR**? Even better they find a chorus member that is currently working in those fields. Some chapters think that it's all about advertising and don't realize that this is a massive job. They just assume that anyone that has experience in some area of media "is perfect for the job."

When I first joined the Society, I was working in media, and before my first month was complete, I was the VP of Marketing and Public Relations. The chapter leadership didn't understand I only knew ¼ of a marketing plan, the promotional/advertising part.

I also discovered that throughout the district **VPs of M/PR** were in the same boat. This meant the promotional aspects of the chapter tended to rely on the experience of the person in the position. If the **VP** had experience in commercial radio the chapter did a lot of radio advertising, or if the **VP** was formerly a newspaper employee the chapter ran a lot of print ads. These facts beg for ***more involvement*** from within your chapter.

If you align yourself to the society job description you already realize that you need to foster other members to help your success. To foster their help, you need to help your members. You need to help your members with their **salesmanship**. You need your chapter to prove their **showmanship** both inside and outside the chapter. You are constantly looking for **sponsorships** for the community externally and for the chapter internally. You are building **relationships** to tap into the untold and unexpected talent within your organization.



As **VP of M/PR** you can influence your **leaders** to work further ahead by planning two or three years in the future. You can influence your **membership** to promote the chapter events and develop a unified vocabulary. You can also develop a job description for your position which is more in line with what you do. This is because you are in the "**Shipbuilding Business**."

Lessons Learned on the Job

I had the privilege of serving as the **VP M/PR** of Harmony Kings for three-years. After reading the Society job description I was ready to "throw in the towel." It was too much for me to manage. Plus, I had a $500.00 annual budget.

My first order of business was writing a marketing plan, seeking guidance on creating a user/member friendly website and getting Facebook functioning. I also worked on internal marketing.

That's when I realized there are natural partnerships within the chapter that I didn't have a relationship with.

1. H.K. had a **VP** of **Communications/Chorus Manager**. His responsibility was to communicate (**Internal marketing**) with the chorus and membership

on upcoming community performances (sing outs). He also booked our chorus gigs (**External Marketing**). Since our duties overlapped, we worked on communication and marketing to membership and potential customers.

2. Aligning with the **Show Committee** helped me learn their plans and build a marketing blueprint for the show.

3. Aligning with the **Membership VP** was particularly important for new member outreach another form of external and later internal marketing.

4. A relationship with the Music VP became invaluable. The Chapter **VP of Music and Performance** organized a group to select the next four years of show themes. This allowed the **VP M/PR** to work further ahead.

5. Developing relationships with each event committee allows the **VP M/PR** to function as a marketing advisor.

Looking back, I should have developed a training program to teach our general membership how to use **Facebook** shares to increase advertising impressions and reach. And should have conducted workshops to develop a unified "elevator speech" to improve word of mouth advertising.

I worked with the **Communication-Chorus Manager VP** on a "rate card" for community performances that factored in venue budget, chorus travel distance, and length of program. We developed a tri-fold brochure as "calling cards" and "leave behinds" with potential performance locations.

Each Chapter has a unique structure with standard and custom board positions as needed. As the **VP of M/PR** you are in a unique position to lead your chorus to greater heights.

The more you build relationships with leadership and membership the more success you will achieve. You're a leader, chosen to manage a huge task, and the more you understand, and practice marketing plans the easier your job will be.

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