Marketing Your Chapter by Understand the Four Marketing Principles

Marketing Your Barbershop Chapter

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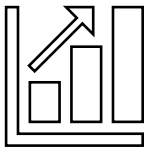
Marketing the 4 P's

By Greg Kronlund, AIB

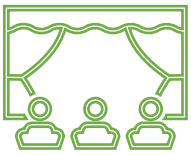


To put it simply your marketing plan helps you find P**roduct**, **Price**, **Place**, and **Promotion,** to create an action plan**.** It is important to realize that advertising is ***NOT*** the beginning but is a result of the first three Ps. Marketing is the Homework; **Advertising is the Test**. This is an example of a chorus focused on community performances (external marketing).

Identification:

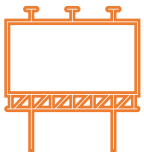
Chorus Product: The Chorus seeks opportunities to perform for community organizations. To sing with other Barbershoppers when possible. The chorus specializes in chorus and quartet customized performances.

Chorus Price: The Chorus' performance pricing will look for the "sweet spot." Pricing too low implies an inferior product, and pricing too high discourages performances. The Chorus will develop a sliding scale for community performance.



Chorus Place: Develop ways to create **top of mind awareness** within the community, civic, and merchant organizations. Tap into the membership's network of friends and acquaintances. Improve Website, Facebook, add an 800 number. Work with members to improve external marketing and performance to win the hearts of the audience.

Chorus Promotion: The chorus currently uses Word of Mouth, Fliers, Posters, and Newspaper Ads. The chorus should explore media like local radio and TV, and Nickel Papers. The chorus should improve and update the chapter website, and Facebook.



Action Plan:

Product: The focus of the chorus is community singing. This plan improves community outreach. The Chorus Manager will develop a plan for community and civic outreach.

Price: Community performances will be on a sliding scale based on venue's budget, length of performance and distance from our rehearsal venue. The chapter will customize price. While still singing five charity performances per year.

Place: Website, Google phone, the chorus manager's outreach, and members. The chapter will work with the membership to make them more comfortable talking about Chapter events. A memorable performance wins a place in the hearts of the audience (**Top of Mind Awareness**).

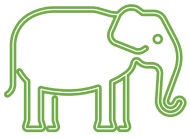
Promotion: Create a tri-fold brochure for potential customers. Promote Community performances on the chapter website, Facebook, and member outreach. For Product extensions such as **Singing Valentines** and **Annual Show** build a separate marketing plan.

It takes time to develop a plan and sounds intimidating, but with practice, you can build marketing plans in short order.

The **KEY** is to **follow/execute** the plan, working ahead of your events while making sure everyone is on the same page

The First P

Question: If you asked three of your members separately to describe your chapter would they say the same thing? If they do then you have a well-defined product, if they don't, your chapter needs work.



If you recall **The Blind Men and the Elephant** by John Godfrey Saxe (1816-1887), you can see that your chapter needs a unified product description. The first **P** of the marketing plan is **Product**.

To decide your Product start by looking at your chapter vision statement and mission statement. This will give you the original intent of the chapter.

Now figure out if the goals of those documents are still in effect, or have they slipped away over time?

It is important to note that your chapter has a product description, and so do each of your events and activities. The product description of your annual show will vary from the overall chapter product.

Start with your chapter:

A quality singing organization that specializes in community performances and fund raising for scholarships to Harmony Explosion Youth Camp.

A fun musical chorus that enjoys singing together, growing in fellowship and social activities.

A chorus of energetic members, striving for improvement, competition, and national recognition.

Whatever your Chapter looks like, develop a product description that most members and leadership can agree upon. In addition, build your product description on features and benefits…what are the benefits of community performances? What are the benefits of gaining National Recognition?

The more you define your product and share it with your membership, the sooner you will begin to develop a unified vocabulary. Now your members become a major part of your marketing plan.

When you are marketing on a shoe-string budget it is important to enlist your members in sharing your chapter's story.

The Second P = How Price Influences the Purchasing Decision

When you make a purchase does price ever influence your buying decision? With inflation you may change brands based on price. You may substitute your favorite brand for a store or a competitive brand. You may switch from high priced gasoline to a generic brand.

The truth is the entertainment dollar is often the first budget cut when prices soar. Your chapter is one of many community entertainment outlets and you need to decide how pricing will affect your audience. Pricing your event **too low** may imply an inferior product, pricing it **too high** may price your audience into choosing an alternative. It is a delicate decision.

Pricing is the second P of the **Marketing Plan**, and you should not take it lightly. Just because you've always charged a certain amount should you continue that price in the current economic situation? On the other hand, pricing can also help increase your average ticket sale.

For instance, a chapter always charged **$40.00** for an anytime SV, **$50.00** for a two-hour delivery, and **$60.00** for an "**on-time**" SV. The average SV sale grossed about **$43.00**. The chapter decided that they would like to move the average SV gross to **$48.00**. Which meant changing the price structure.

The Chapter increased the SV delivery in two ways.

First, they increased the "***any-time***" delivery from **$40.00** to **$45.00**. **Secondly**, they added **$2.00** for extra roses. This change allowed another element of customization.

Justification: the difference between a **$40.00** delivery and a **$50.00** delivery is **$10.00**, making it difficult for some purchasers to justify buying up to the next level. While increasing to a **$45.00** delivery it was only a **$5.00** jump to a **$50.00** purchase. This made selling much easier, "It's only 5-bucks sir, and you get it delivered within a two-hour window. You can also add extra roses at only $2.00 apiece."

With eleven extra roses (to make a dozen) a $**45.00** delivery became **$67.00**. The Chapter bought roses at **$1.50**… It all adds up! (**$45.00** for the delivery + $**22.00** for the 11 extra roses = **$67.00 gross**)

The Third P – Place

This seems simple enough. It means the location of your performance, the location of your ticket outlets, the location of your audience. So- Location, Location, Location.

It also means your place in the hearts of your audience/customer. This is a little more difficult to figure out. However, if you have made a positive emotional impact on the audience, they will be ready to buy again and again.

Most chapters worry about the planning, the show, the advertising, the ticket sales, the risers, the transportation, the headlining quartet, the refreshments, the set-up, the clean-up, and dozens of other *things*.

Sometimes we forget about earning a place in the hearts of our customers. Just as we know an exceptional performance will win audiences, a mediocre performance can lose them.

A few years ago, a chapter decided to "phone blitz" the data base of the last two years of Singing Valentine customers. The phone team was surprised to discover that more than one customer said that they tried it, but the quartet didn't sing very well, and they decided not to order again.

Some customers were thrilled with the aspect of another Valentine and re-ordered.

So, place is ***more*** than just your location, it's how you make your customer feel, both physically, and emotionally. Did you leave them wanting more?

Just as location is important, a place in their **hearts** may be even more important.

The Fourth P

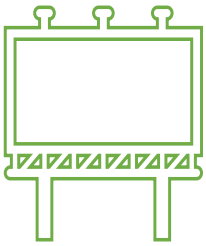
The **Fourth P** is the promotion or advertising principal of marketing. The first **Three Ps** (Product, Price, Place) give you a blueprint for writing your message and deciding your delivery channel (media).

Your earlier work should give you an idea of what the product is and what makes it unique, the impact of price on your customer, and the place the product is available. Now it's time to decide your message, and how to "spread the word."

Here's a few things to keep in mind:

- To create Top of Mind Awareness, deliver your message as often as possible.
- Design your Marketing to reach targeted individuals and demographics.
- Frequent messaging invades the sub-conscience to propel the message to the front of the mind... where the customer can decide their response.
- Your message needs a Call to Action...so your customer can decide Yes, No, or Maybe, about your product!

There are two basic types of advertising: **maintenance** and **event**. Maintenance is your daily and ongoing work to increase your visibility within your communities. (**Chapter Website**, **Facebook**, **Member** word of mouth, your **community outreach,** and **performance**.) Event advertising is short-range outreach to increase attendance at **shows**, purchase **Singing Valentines**, or other **events**.



Maintenance advertising is on-going, and relies on your membership, your website, and your social media to increase your visibility. Recruitment of new members falls under the maintenance category.

Event advertising has a shelf life. You are advertising for a brief period for an event that has a begin date and end date. It is hard to gage the time and length of ad campaign. Typically, event advertising on media begins about two-weeks before the event, but if you are relying on posters, flyers and word of mouth begin much earlier. Experience will help you figure out the best time to reach your community.

Advanced Concepts of Advertising

The fourth P is promotion, usually identified as advertising. Advertising is a method of a.) ***educating*** *and encouraging* new customers to your product, or b.) reminding existing users of an upcoming event. Advertising relies on the **three basic learning styles**, **reach and frequency**, and **target demos** to succeed (matching user with media).

Learning styles:

Space – Repetition: if you've ever taught yourself a computer program, you worked on the program, walked away for several hours, and then returned to try again. Each time you returned; the program seemed to get a little easier. This is space/repetition.

Rhythm and Rhyme: millions of Americans cannot recite the alphabet, but they can sing it. Melody is another part of this learning style. If something like this sounds familiar: "8 times 8 fell on the floor, when I picked it up it was 64" you understand Rhythm and Rhyme.

Visual and Aural: visual learners do not respond as well to verbal messages. Aural learners do not respond as well to written messages.

Of the three basic learning styles Americans use a combination of all three. If you learn songs strictly from learning tracks what learning styles are you employing?

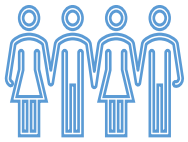
Statistically, a potential customer needs to hear or see your message at least three times. To do this, you need to take into consideration **Reach** and **Frequency**.

Reach = the number of individuals that will see or hear my message one time.

Frequency = the number of times I must repeat my message for potential customers to hear or see the advertising message three times****.

As an example: **Radio** has limited reach, but it's usually less expensive so you can buy frequency. **Television** has tremendous reach but is usually more expensive, so it costs more to buy frequency. **Print** varies by type of target demographic; however, newsprint continues to increase prices as circulation declines. **Internet** has tremendous reach and frequency and is usually inexpensive. With internet you must carefully place ads to target demographics.

**** When a person sees or hears an ad three times, they make one of three decisions. Yes, I need the product right now, No I'll never need the product or, maybe I'll need the product later, so I'll file it for future reference. In your advertising you are striving for "yeses" and "maybes." ****



Target Demos = the profile of your current and potential user.

What is your user's profile? Age, gender, income, presence of children under age 12, household size, education, and occupation. It's helpful to create a picture of the customer you have and want.

Example: Your primary customer is a 55-year-old female, earning at least $35,000.00 a year, with a college degree, in a household of three, working in the private sector with no children under 12-years old. With this profile you can select the media, the message, and the delivery channel (media) that will be most effective. The advertising media you choose should **match your customer profile** as closely as possible.

This is, of course, the ideal method of building an advertising plan, but if your budget is only $500.00 a year, you'll only be able to scratch the surface. But this knowledge will help in your planning.

Due to available funds, you may find it best to select one of your events and concentrate your budget on that. One year you might focus on building a strong Singing Valentine's program or use the money to shore up your annual show.

Remember that **Product**, **Price** and **Place** are the **blueprint** for your advertising **message.** The first three Ps are your guide to finding your message and delivery channel.

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