

Chapter 12

12 Public Relations: Created Private Media

- Introduction
- The house journal
- Planning the house journal
- Budgeting
- New forms of house journals
- Types and uses of AV media
- Other created media
- Summary

Objectives

At the end of this chapter students will be able to:

- Examine and planning house journal
- Understand the ways of planning the budget for the production
- Demonstrate the types and uses of AV media
- Understand and explain other created media

12.1 INTRODUCTION

In order to reach certain targeted audience or publics, and in order to achieve particular objectives, the mass media or press, radio and television may not be appropriate especially if these publics comprises small or specialized groups. One public which immediately comes to mind is the staff (or the membership) who may be best reached by house journals. In this chapter, created private media, rather than commercial public media will be discussed.

12.2 HOUSE JOURNALS

There are two kinds of house journals (once called house organ and now sometimes called company newspaper/newsletter), these being the internal (staff or employee) magazine or newspaper, and the external (which would be targeted at a specific outside readership). House journals should not be confused with controlled circulation journals which are commercial publications.



Publications distributed to members or supporters of organizations such as professional institutions, universities, societies, trade unions and charities are best described as semi-externals. While theirs is not a staff readership it is a more intimately involved readership than the users, patrons, customers, dealers, shareholders or opinion leaders to which externals may be directed.

There are four types of house journal namely:

- ◆ **Magazines**

This kind of house journal has a magazine format, the favourite page size being A4 (297 x 110mm). The content will be mainly feature articles and illustrations.



- ◆ **Newspapers**

Often resembling a tabloid newspaper, the content will consist mainly of news items supported by feature articles and illustrations.

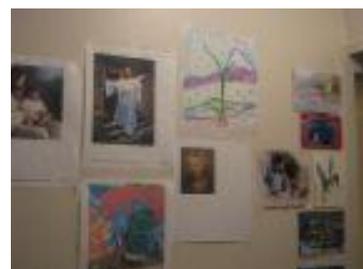


- ◆ **Newsletter**

Consisting of perhaps two to eight pages, a newsletter may be A4 size and contain brief items with or without pictures.

- ◆ **Wall newspaper**

Produced like a small poster and fixed to walls, this is a medium used for both internal and external use.



12.3 PLANNING A NEW HOUSE JOURNAL

There are several guideline that has to be considered by the PR practitioner in order to ensure the successful planning of new house journal. The considerations are:

◆ **Readership** – Who will read this publication? Are different journals necessary for different readers, eg. Management and executives on the one hand, factory staff on the other? The readership has to be recognized and understood just as seriously as with a commercial journal. This will influence the style and content.

◆ **Quantity** – How many copies are required of each issue? This will affect the method of production and the quality of materials and content.

◆ **Frequency** – The journal should be published regularly and have a known publication date. How often it is to be published: quarterly, monthly, fortnightly, weekly or daily?

◆ **Policy** – What is the purpose of the journal? Paternal free-gift house organs are relics of the past. It is to inform readers about the organization, provide a link for employees or members of a scattered organization, help dealers to understand and sell the product or to provide a forum for readers' experiences and views.



◆ **Title** – what is the journal to be called, and what sort of masthead (title design) will it have? The title should be distinctive and characteristic. Care should be given to this decision because it is unwise to change titles once one has become familiar.

◆ **Style and format** – The size of the page, how many columns to the page, black and white or colour, typography, extent of illustrations, balance of news and features all contribute to the appearance. A house journal should be interesting as any journal the reader would normally buy. Credibility can be killed if heavy shiny paper is used for a tabloid newspaper. It can be foolish to make the journal look prestigious when the real purpose is to get it read. Pages should be designed to make the material interesting, readable and legible.

◆ **Free issue or cover price** – Will it be issued free of charge, or will readers be asked to pay a cover price? This can depend upon the value which readers place upon the journal.

◆ **Advertisement** – Will it carry advertisement, eg. Staff sales and wants, company advertising or outside commercial advertising? A good circulation with an influential readership may be attractive to national advertisers. In some journals, employees are invited to insert small classified advertisements free of charge. They add greatly to the reader's interest. The presence of advertising can add realism to a house journal.

◆ **Distribution** – How will copies reach readers? By post, hand distribution round the premises, with salaries and wages, or at distribution points? Postal distribution to readers' homes is often the best method, with the possible bonus of family readership.



12.4 BUDGETING

From the above, it will be realized that many factors affect the cost, and these factors offer many variables and considerations. There are several considerations that will be necessary to consider:

- ◆ How often a journal of a certain number of pages and of a certain production standard can be produced for the money.
- ◆ The value of any income, if any, from sale of copies and or sale of advertisement space which will offset costs.
- ◆ The value of the journal as a means of achieving PR objectives. For example, it could be the principal medium for reaching an important public.
- ◆ Working hour expenditure has also to be considered. Can the PR manager accept editorship within his or her workload? Or will a full-time designer have to be engaged or will the whole job be placed with a specialist consultant?
- ◆ If the journal to be pictorial, will pictures be supplied free of charge by readers or other suppliers, or will professional photographers or photographic agency fee have to be paid?

12.5 NEW FORMS OF HOUSE JOURNALS

There are four new forms of house journals namely:

- ◆ Audio tapes/CDs – news can be recorded on small music cassette tapes or CDs for reply by employees on cassette recorders or CDW in the office, home and especially in the car.



- ◆ Video house journals – such as those produced by companies in their own video studios. The great advantages of these house journals is their realism, making use of colour, sound and movement and bringing people to life to an extent impossible in static print.

- ◆ Corporate video – a new form of video house journal is the corporate communication private TV network, transmitted by satellite throughout the day to the premises of the company.



- ◆ Electronic newspapers – which can be transmitted to personal computer with hard copy printers.

12.6 TYPES OF AV MEDIA

There are many types of AV media such as:



- ◆ 35 mm slides – very popular and ideal for illustrating talks and presentations. Slides can be fed into a carousel and operated by the speaker with a remote control push button device. An advantage of slides is that each one is separate and can be replaced by a new or different slide.

- ◆ Synchronised slide-tape projection – a sophisticated and valuable advance on the previous method, slides are synchronised with a taped commentary to which can be added background music. The showing can be operated manually, and interrupted by the presenter – or automatically.



- ◆ Power point – latest and most useful development in desktop presentation, devised and marketed by Microsoft. It enables the PRO to create material on computer, quickly and easily, and present it either on computer or beamed up onto a large screen. Virtually any type of materials can be incorporated, including pictures, line drawings, graphics and text, in colour and black.

- ◆ Overhead projectors – the main advantage of this visual aid is that it can be operated in daylight by a speaker facing the audience. The speaker can lay down ready-made sheets of film bearing charts, statistics or other information that is less easily presented verbally. Or the speaker can write or draw on a blank piece of film as he or she speaks, projecting the image on a screen as and when required.

- ◆ Videocassettes – useful for internal communications such as the induction of recruits but can be used elsewhere such as in shops, showrooms, hotel rooms or on exhibitions stand where the small screen can be viewed comfortably. Video may also be used at press receptions, for explaining the annual report and accounts to staff, or for explaining the amenities of a new venue to which a company wishes to relocate their offices.

12.7 USES OF AV MEDIA

The above descriptions have already suggested some of the ways in which AVs may be used by the PR practitioner. The following is a more detailed list:



◆ **Invited audiences** – presentation can be made to invited guests in private cinemas, business premises, hotel rooms or hired halls. These presentations can augment talks, demonstrations or exhibits.

◆ **Libraries** – Videos may be placed in libraries which will catalogue, handle requests, distribute and maintain them in good condition. There are also libraries which stock ‘library’ shots, eg. Airlines in flight for use in feature films and TV series



◆ **Press receptions** – Most press conferences can be enhanced by the showing of a short, relevant video

◆ **Exhibitions** – Avs of various kinds can be an attraction and intimate communication especially if the rest of the exhibit is static. Movement can be an asset on stands.

◆ **Employee communication** – AVs provides attractive and intimate communication eg. Overcoming the remoteness of management who may be located elsewhere, even overseas. Ships’ crews can be communicated with in this way.



◆ **Rural audience** – If audience live in country or scattered locations, AVs can be taken to or sent to them. Farmers can be given video performances at agricultural shows by means of mobile cinemas. The “road show” methods of showing videos in market squares can be used.

12.8 OTHER CREATED MEDIA

There are also other created media as follows:

◆ **Educational literature** – not to be confused with sales literature, educational literature consists of all printed materials which helps to explain or encourage the use of product or service or is associated interest and value. For example, recipe leaflet and cookery books.



◆ *The spoken words* – the giving of talks perhaps supported by AVs, can be an important PR activity. Some organizations employ full-time speakers who address clubs and societies, but otherwise suitable personnel from the organization may give talks.

◆ *Seminar and conferences* – the aim of such PR events is to make presentation to selected people. They should be dressed up with sales and trade displays, the object being educational rather than selling.



◆ *Private exhibitions* – these can be permanent on company or at special sites, or they can be mobile – either travelled by caravan, bus, train, aircraft or ship.

12.9 SUMMARY

In order to reach certain publics to achieve particular objectives, the mass media of press, radio and television may not be appropriate, especially if these publics comprise small or specialised groups. One public which immediately comes to mind is the staff who may be best reached by house journals.



House journals comprises of two kinds, namely internal house journals and external house journals. Internal house journals for the use of the internal people such as the staff of the company. While the external house journals for the use of outside people like such as customers and many more.

Publication distributed to members or supporters of organisation such as professional institutes, universities, societies, trade union and charities are best described as semi-externals.

There are several considerations to be taken into consideration before planning namely the readership, the quantity, the frequency of publication, the policy, the title, the style and format, advertisement, distribution and free issue or cover price.

12.10 QUESTIONS

Section A: Short answer questions.

- 1 What is meant by internal and external house journals?
- 2 What are five types of house journals?
- 3 What is meant by format?
- 4 What factors enter into the budgeting of a house journals?
- 5 What is power point? Explain its advantages.
- 6 How can videos be used for PR purposes?
- 7 What is meant by educational literature?
- 8 What is private exhibition?