



MARKETING GUIDE

BOY SCOUTS



OF AMERICA



Marketing Minded

Marketing is one of a council or district's most exciting and important functions. It makes things happen. Marketing can have a dramatic impact on membership growth, contributions, United Way relationships, new-unit growth, volunteer recruitment, and more.

We often focus on selling, since selling constitutes action and can be used to measure success. These measurements can answer questions like "How much has youth membership increased?" and "How much has financial support grown?"

Effective use of marketing techniques can make promoting Venturing easier and more productive. Marketing can be used as a means to *growth*.

This publication highlights techniques for marketing Venturing. It should encourage you to

- Get excited about marketing one of Scouting's most viable, fastest-growing programs.
- Build a Venturing marketing plan as part of your district and/or council marketing plan.
- Provide suggestions for marketing Venturing.

For additional information on building a district or council marketing plan, see the following BSA resources:

- Two-Year Marketing Plan on CD-ROM. This resource contains The Strategic Marketing Plan Workbook for Local Councils and the District Positive Publicity Workbook. It is available by contacting External Communications at the national office.
- *Marketing Update* newsletter, available from BSA External Communications

Building a Plan for Venturing Marketing

Most of us wouldn't think of taking a long trip without proper planning. Every trip plan should have some basic parts, as should every marketing plan. First, we need to know where we are now; second, where we are going; and third, how we are going to get there. Develop your Venturing marketing plan the same way.

Step One: Analysis



Some research might be done ahead of your first meeting to answer some of these questions, but a group discussion is a healthy way to understand where you are prior to setting your goals and identifying your challenges. Answer these questions:

- What are our Venturing program's strengths and weaknesses?
- Where are our existing crews located? With troops? At religious institutions?
- How much does our community know about Venturing?
- What is our district or council's Venturing history?
- What is our relationship to local school districts?
- Do religious and school authorities really know about Venturing and its benefits to them and to youth?
- How much do teenagers know about Venturing?
- How much do businesses know about Venturing?

- How much do local council board members and other volunteers know about Venturing?
- How much do our packs and troops know about Venturing?
- What marketing resources do we presently use (e.g., newspapers, radio, TV, trade journals, etc.)?

Step Two: Marketing Objective Statement



The format of a marketing objectives statement should be clear and simple and should relate to your mission statement. Next, identify your goals and objectives in a way that

you will know when you get there. In marketing, two types of goals exist:

Image goals. You either want to be perceived a certain way or you want to change the way others perceive you. If either of these perceptions is important to you, be sure to set image goals. For example:

- We want to be seen as the leading youth development program for teenagers.
- We want to change our image to show Venturing's positive impact on the lives of teenagers.

Action goals. These are measurable goals. For example:

- We want to have Venturing crews associated with 100 percent of our troops.
- We want to conduct 15 service club presentations.

Goals should be ambitious, but achievable. You may set image goals, action goals, or both. Because situations constantly change, goals may have to be revised from time to time.



Step Three: Plan of Action



This is the largest section because it constitutes where most of the work is done. A plan of action can be chronological, functional, or a combination of both. A chronological plan follows a calendar schedule for things to do in all steps of planning. A functional plan includes categories such as internal, schools, businesses, service clubs, parents, students, and general public. Here are some examples:

Internal

- Write articles about Venturing for the council newsletter.
- Develop a Venturing teenage-oriented newsletter.
- Report on Venturing at council and district meetings.
- Have Venturers present reports.
- Display Venturing pictures at the local council service center and at camp.
- Provide adequate Venturing resources at the trading post.
- Have Venturers give the invocation or openings at district, council, and public functions.
- Use the Venturing Awards and Recognition Plan for Venturers and leaders.
- Make sure Venturing is part of district and council activities such as annual dinners, Scout shows, and camporees (as staff).
- Encourage staff members and volunteers to wear the Venturing uniform.
- Have crews conduct programs for Cub Scout packs and Boy Scout troops.
Example: A crew could do a pinewood derby workshop for a pack or teach a merit badge class for Boy Scouts.

- Maintain a bulletin board with pictures of Venturing activities.
- Train and encourage crews to have their own public relations plan.
- Feature Venturing at executive board meetings and at Cub Scout and Boy Scout roundtables.
- Design your own brochures, posters, and leaflets.

Schools

- Present a program on Venturing benefits for school district personnel, principals, guidance counselors, etc.
- Meet with guidance counselors to brief them on Venturing.
- Show a Venturing promotional video at schools.
- Leave informational brochures with counselors.
- Send counselors a copy of the open house letter.
- Share successes with school personnel.
- Adequately thank school personnel.
- Invite school personnel to Venturing activities.
- Put school personnel on the mailing list for your Venturing newsletter or council newsletter.
- Design and use a Venturing information (marketing) kit for school personnel.
- Host a recognition and information breakfast, luncheon, or reception for school district leaders and principals.
- Present awards such as the Silver, Ranger, and Quartermaster awards at school assemblies.

Businesses

- Present a Venturing program at chief executive officer roundtables, etc.
- Schedule regular, individual visits with corporation heads and managers to discuss Venturing.
- Invite corporation heads to Venturing activities, e.g., recognition activities and events.
- Have Venturers speak at or provide some service to meetings of corporate heads.
- In a very visible way, recognize businesses that support Venturing.
- Place Venturing articles in trade magazines and in-house newsletters.
- Place ads or articles on Venturing in newsletters and magazines of chambers of commerce.
- Design and use a Venturing information (marketing) kit for businesses.
- Leave Venturing brochures in office waiting areas.
- Display Venturing posters in public business areas like storefronts and malls.
- Have Venturers present demonstrations in business areas like malls.
- Request the use of unused billboards around town.



Service Clubs

- Have volunteers, Venturers, and staff members present programs about Venturing. Make a list of clubs and visit them regularly.
- Have Venturers and crews support service club projects.
- Have Venturers apply for service club scholarships.
- Have Venturers speak to clubs about big accomplishments such as receiving a Venturing scholarship.
- Invite service clubs to support district or council Venturing activities.
- Place Venturing articles in service club newsletters.
- Have service clubs provide Venturing scholarships or sponsor Venturers.
- Design and use a Venturing information (marketing) kit for service clubs.

Parents

- Send a Venturing newsletter to parents explaining what Venturing is and its benefits to their son or daughter.
- Using parts of the annual crew meeting plan, prepare the crew and assist members with planning evening parents' meetings.
- Target parents with public relations.
- Invite parents to open houses and have a meeting with them to discuss their role.
- Design a brochure or kit for parents.

Students

- Display Venturing posters at schools.
- Distribute announcements about crew successes and Venturing activities.

- Have Venturing displays and demonstrations in hallways and lunch areas.
- Distribute informational brochures designed for students.
- Participate in school assemblies. Be sure the program tells what Venturing is and what local crews do.
- Have Venturers visible at all Scouting events and even unit activities. (Students can also be found in troops.)
- Target students with public relations.
- Publish articles regularly about Venturing and crew activities in school newspapers.
- Conduct Venturing recognitions in visible ways such as presenting the Leadership Award, Venturing Gold Award, or Young American Award during an assembly or at the halftime of a game.
- Place articles in newspapers and newsletters about Venturers' recognitions and accomplishments.
- Display Venturing posters or exhibits where students hang out.
- Publish results of the hobby interest survey.
- Use peer spokesmen.

Your marketing plan can produce amazing results if well executed, and you will have a great time along the way. Remember that your marketing efforts must be consistent and sustained. A monthlong marketing campaign will probably have a positive impact, but not one of the magnitude of a coordinated, consistent three-year effort. Once results can be seen, you will start looking for the marketing potential in everything you do. Marketing can have a powerful influence on your district or council's success. Make marketing part of your style.

