50 Marketing Ideas for Your County
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Marketing Programs

Ensuring a variety of individuals know about your programs and events through various outlets helps to get information to the public. Implementing the following can help the success of FVSU Extension.

1. Mail a monthly postcard to everyone on your mailing list that entails what is happening for that month.

2. Produce professional radio spots. Radio stations are required to provide a certain amount of free air time for public service announcements; use that requirement to your advantage.

3. Never underestimate the value of word-of-mouth marketing. Tell people you meet what events you have coming up.

4. Share the costs of programs and promotion. Ask local businesses or organizations to help. For example, invite the local implement dealers to host a program on tractor safety or a local grocery store to sponsor a food safety seminar. (But try to invite all competing businesses so it doesn’t look like you are playing favorites.)

5. Use community marquees to further promote public programs.

6. Set up tables in local stores. Many shopping malls and discount stores will let you set up a stand for free, as long as you are a nonprofit organization.

7. Target your mailings based on not only demographics (age, gender) but also interest (foods, nutrition, agriculture, and youth).

8. Add a “Dates to remember” section at the back of the newsletter, where readers can always find upcoming event information.

9. Use give-aways at the county fair and other events to get additional names for potential customers.

10. Host an informative table at school orientation.

11. Take advantage of a captive audience. Post flyers where people wait or spend a lot of time: at the doctor’s office, dentist’s office, pharmacy, car repair station, restaurants, donut shops, coffee shops, post offices, local stores, public restrooms, libraries and other public locations.

12. Use the same materials multiple times. That is, put your newsletter information on the Web site. Condense program information for a newspaper column.

13. Use multiple means to market an event. Not everyone reads the newspaper or listens to the radio. By sending the message in multiple ways, you can increase the chances that your target group got the message. And the more they get the message, the more they are likely to attend.

14. Other ways to get the word out: bumper stickers, t-shirts, posters, screen shot in the local movie theater, window decorations in local businesses, and a float in the local parade.

15. Offer the program announced to the public soon after you promote it.
16. Use email as a marketing tool. Send out reminders of upcoming events via email. Or send an e-newsletter; it is cheaper than a print newsletter but only effective if the recipients will really read the electronic version.

17. Include information about what you are doing or have been doing in the local Chamber of Commerce letter that goes to all chamber members. Research your audience. Find out their statistics, demographics, what type of information they want and how they want to receive it. Target your communications based on this information.

**Marketing Relationships**

**Networking and developing relationships with influential leaders/officials in the county, state, and national level helps endorse FVSU Extension positively.**

18. Try and meet once a year in person with your local county commissioners and legislators at their homes or businesses.

19. See if there is an opportunity to include commissioners and legislators in tours or meetings. Try and get them to a real event and let them see Extension “in action.”


21. Always respond to local media, even if you just find them a source outside FVSU Extension. The willingness to go the extra mile in finding background information and back-up data for reporters is so important.

22. Remember to market your service and expertise when meeting with other agencies.

23. Send monthly newsletters to decision makers and stakeholders.

24. Develop and maintain good relationships with news media.

25. Try to get an article to the paper at least once a month.

26. Understand that newspapers are not popular with all age groups. Depending on the group you are targeting with a program or service, focus your media relations effort on reporters who write for sections aimed at reaching young adults, teens or kids, for example.

27. Traditional mass media may not be the only way to reach your local public. Ask people you know how they receive information and find out how to get your message into those outlets.

28. Special sections in newspapers, or features on radio and television, are opportunities for you and your program. The advertising director at these media often will let you know when special features are planned. Find ways to match your program to the planned topic.

29. Ask a local news reporter to come talk to your county staff about what makes news at their newspaper or station (radio or television). They’ll appreciate the opportunity to educate potential news sources, and you’ll get a chance to present yourself as objective providers of local information.
Marketing Extension

These pertain to marketing the system, explaining the value of FVSU Extension in your county

30. Promote the FVSU Extension system when conducting programs.

31. Produce, distribute, and use a general FVSU Extension brochure.

32. Wear name badges with the FVSU Extension and county logo on it.

33. Raffle FVSU Extension shirts, caps, aprons, or other items that feature our logo at programs or fairs. Be creative but rational with giveaways. Get items useful to your audience and related to specific topics.

34. Look professional when you are representing FVSU Extension.

35. Purchase and wear “wearables” (hats, shirts, jackets) that identify your affiliation with FVSU Extension.

36. Get and use an electronic logo for your county, combining the FVSU Extension logo and your county name.

37. Always hand out marketing items (pencils, notepads, bookmarks, buttons) at fairs and other highly attended events.

38. Use a short promotional FVSU Extension video.

39. Think NASCAR – always name your sponsors. For example, when doing an activity, give credit to the person(s) or organization hosting the activity, your county, and FVSU Extension.

40. When writing thank-you notes, use professional-quality note cards.

41. “Tie a ribbon” campaign. Make people aware of how influential FVSU Extension is by FVSU Extension employees in your community tying a color ribbon to their car antenna.

42. Add FVSU Extension identification to news releases and other educational materials released to news media and public.

43. Develop a direct mail campaign to FVSU alumni in your county

44. Contact new residents to your area through welcome wagon packets, realtors, etc.

45. Invite influential community and business leaders to a luncheon to let them know what information and resources are available through your FVSU Extension office.

46. Place pictures of all past events on the FVSU web site, so people can get an idea of what our activities “look like.”

47. Develop a “brag” newsletter. Use it to report on how programs are going. Brag on faculty, volunteer, and participant awards. Introduce new employees or volunteers. Make it a “warm and cozy” read.

48. Produce a promotional interactive kiosk featuring the many areas of knowledge available from FVSU Extension.
49. Collect news clippings about your program and post them on bulletin boards or other public displays.

50. Host an informative table at local stores. For example, host a healthy diet or food safety table at your local grocery store. Have a sign-up at the table for a free FVSU Extension apron and use the sign-up to add to your mailing list.


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