Topic 4: Traditional Publications — Still Valid, Still Valued

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Rutgers Alumni Association
Communication Planning

• **Clearly identify objectives** – what do you want your communication activities to accomplish?

• **Determine target audience** – who are you sharing information with, and how are you disseminating that information?

• **Develop key messages** – messages should be clear, benefit-oriented and written in language your target audience can relate to

• **Choose tactics** – how do you plan to communicate, and how often? Consider how your audience currently receives information, as well as new ways to reach them.
Communication Tactics

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<th>TRADITIONAL PRINT COMMUNICATIONS:</th>
<th>ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS:</th>
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The most effective campaigns use multiple tactics and are delivered repeatedly over time via multiple channels.
Rutgers Alumni Association
Communication Plan

OBJECTIVES:

• Inform members about the association’s agenda and goals

• Publicize association events/programs and encourage participation

• Recruit new volunteers

• Highlight accomplishments of committees and volunteers

• Highlight accomplishments of outstanding alumni who credit Rutgers for their success
Rutgers Alumni Association
Communication Plan

TARGET AUDIENCE:

• Our members range from classes from the 1930s through the class of 2009

• Largest concentration is located in New Jersey, but RAA members are spread across the US
Rutgers Alumni Association Communication Plan

KEY MESSAGES:

• We are a volunteer-run organization
• We bring together alumni and friends for fun/social events, networking, and service projects
• We offer volunteer and leadership opportunities
• We help foster a lifelong Rutgers bond
Rutgers Alumni Association
Communication Plan

TACTICS:
Mix of traditional print and electronic communications

- 1766 Magazine
- KnightLife newsletter
- RU Aware newsletter
- Direct mail/postcards/flyers
- Web site
- E-mail blasts (html)
- Social networking
  - Facebook, Linked-In
Restructuring prompted significant changes

- Ceased publication of *KnightLife* newsletter
- Ceased publication of *RU Aware* newsletter
- Direct mail/postcards reserved for communications to prior participants of events, or for special events with smaller audiences
- Shift to e-communications

*The decision was made to continue publishing 1766 twice a year to the membership. It is a vital publication and the cornerstone of the RAA’s communication plan.*
1766 Magazine — History

- Began publishing in 1982
- 16-pages, 2-color format
- Distributed to 10-12,000 alumni (dues-paying RAA members)
- Articles written by volunteers/members of the communications committee and AR staff
- Approximately 3 months production time for design, printing, & mailing
1766 Magazine – Redesign

- Redesigned in 2003 as a 4-color publication
- Increased page count to 24 pages
- Increased circulation to 16,000
- Reduced print cost by more than half
- Production turnaround time reduced to 4 weeks for design, printing and mailing

New technologies in printing and desktop publishing streamlined production and significantly reduced costs
1766 Magazine – Redesign

- Publication contains engaging stories written by volunteers, most of whom are professional or aspiring writers and editors
- Combination of longer feature articles and shorter event briefs/highlights
- Professionally designed, with eye-catching graphics that complement articles
PLAN A: Subscription Offers

- Fall 2008 we began offering subscriptions to the magazine at $10 per year
- Subscription form printed within the magazine

Many need to expand subscription offer to a larger audience through a direct mail campaign.

1766 Subscription Offer!
Help the Rutgers Alumni Association continue to bring Rutgers’ engaged and active alumni the latest insights and happenings within our alumni community and the university by subscribing to 1766 magazine. As an independent association, the RAA strives to bring its members unique stories and information about the Rutgers community — as well as your friends and fellow alumni.

Your $10 yearly subscription to 1766 will help the RAA maintain the excellence of our own magazine and offset some of the cost of sending it to all of our members.

Send your $10 check, made payable to the "Rutgers Alumni Association" to: Rutgers Alumni Association, P.O. Box 11320, New Brunswick, NJ 08906

PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY, COMPLETE THIS FORM, AND ENCLOSE IT WITH YOUR CHECK. THANK YOU!

NAME
ADDRESS
CITY
STATE
ZIP
PHONE
E-MAIL ADDRESS

To download a subscription form, or to pay with a credit card or PayPal account, go to www.RutgersAlumni.org

Click on 1766 MAGAZINE ➔ Subscription Form on the left side menu bar
PLAN B: Advertising Space Sales

- Fall 2009 began offering advertising space within the magazine
- Developed media kit to support ad sales effort
- Goal for spring 2010 is to produce $5000 in revenue

Expanded plan may include “business card” section and/or classified advertising
With the success of the subscription and advertising sales efforts, 1766 will be published as a self-funded communications vehicle.
Application of Lessons Learned

• Develop a communication plan that is appropriate for your group
  – Define your audience
  – Determine how members want to receive information
  – Decide which tactics would be most effective, and determine the schedule and method of delivery
Application of Lessons Learned

If print is applicable for your group:

• Offer subscriptions, even if you only publish once a year
• Look for short-run digital printing solutions such as Staples, Kinkos, and small local printers
• Look for sponsors to subsidize costs
• Sell advertising space and or booster ads in newsletters or event programs
• Make publications/promotional pieces as eye-catching and attractive as possible
• Be sure that the content is clear and audience-focused
RAA size and budget may be larger – but the principles are scalable!