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| **Top 10 Tips: Getting out there: Tips for running stalls** |

**Why do it?**

* Be clear about the purpose of the stall. Is it to seek community feedback on a proposed initiative? Is it to promote an upcoming event or series of courses?
* Generally, one clear purpose is best (otherwise passers-by get confused). A secondary purpose that dovetails with the main one can work. For example, MASH2 solar bulk-buy (purpose to gain expressions of interest), secondary purpose (find out which electricity retailer they are with, once engaged, and if a non-green retailer then encourage to switch).
* Ensure that a mechanism for evaluating the success of the stall is determined in advance. For example, the number of feedback forms completed/course materials handed out/expressions of interest.
* Ensure that everyone involved in the decision to run the stall has ‘bought into’ the objectives. Don’t be too ambitious. Under-shooting is the safest best, then if you do better everyone will be pleased!

**What to have on your stall?**

* Attention grabbers:
  + Large, simple graphics/banners/posters – with clear message - at eye height draw attention
  + Something tangible they can try/see/feel that relates to what you are promoting
  + Something fun and different: this is only limited by your imagination and resources! Remember, you are reaching out to people when they are out-and-about, possibly with their families. Put on something that will engage the kids so the parents can talk (separate kids corner with drawing things etc),
* Printed materials
  + Short one page flyer(s) about what you are promoting – ideally with pics – with URL, tel for more details. (Steer clear of details). Have backup detailed info to hand for those who are really interested.
* If relevant: Sign up forms: Mailing list, become a volunteer, course, feedback form (option to be anonymous)
* Practical stuff: trestle table/chairs, pop-up graphics (if your budget extends to this)/posters, leaflet display racks, pens, laptop/Wifi hot spot, sticky tape, blutack, scissors, sunscreen ad water etc

**Where to have it?**

* Find a spot on the high street or at a busy shopping centre.
* Regular local farmers markets can be great
* One-off events like school fetes, agricultural shows or community festivals.
* Choose peak times — like Saturday mornings.
* Choose somewhere with plenty of space — don’t block exits or shop entrances.
* Protect your stall from the elements — in the height of summer or the depths of winter. Invest in marquee or similar.
* Choose somewhere with easy access — can you park nearby to unload your table, chairs and boxes of materials?
* Take photos of your stall to send to the media – use in your centre and put in your next newsletter.

**How to brand it? (without costing the earth)**

* Create a banner for your organisation which can be used at all stalls/events: logo, organisation’s name, tagline and URL/tel
* Ensure your logo, URL and tel are on everything. Consistent typeface(s) on all printed materials.
* Think creatively about use of flags, posters, signs using your organisation’s brand colours to attract attention to stall
* Extend branding to the people manning the stall: name badges with logo, branded T-shirts, or simply ask them to wear your brand colours

**Don’t forget to promote it in advance**

* Use your communications channels to tell people you are going to be out and about (poster on community notice boards, enewsletter, website events section, brief volunteers etc)
* If it is newsworthy, then issue a press release

**How often?**

* Setting a regular schedule of stalls/community outreach events – and publicising them – is by far and away the best option. Certainly much more effective than running them spasmodically and with little advance publicity.
* People LOVE to know that your organisation will be at an event (like a market) on a regular basis, that you are accessible and they know how to find you/talk to you should they want. By doing this, you’ll be showing your community that you are accessible and open as an organisation and receptive to community feedback.

**Who should be on the stall?**

The volunteers and/or staff who man your stalls are your ambassadors. You need to find people who are all of the following:

* Well-briefed on the purpose of the stall and whatever it is that you are promoting
* Enthusiastic and good at initiating conversations with passers-by (good at small talk; don’t start with the ‘sell’; just engage)
* Clear communicators and – particularly important – good listeners
* Stand, don’t sit. Smile. Make eye contact. Be positive.
* Dress appropriately and don’t complain about the weather

Make sure you have published a timetable for the manning of the stall and sent this out to all volunteers/staff in advance, to check it is OK with them. Ensure each person has enough breaks and knows where to go for food/water. Manning a stall can be quite taxing!

Don’t forget to thank them! And let them know the results.

**How to measure results?**

* If you’ve got your purpose clear, set objectives and worked out mechanisms for measuring/monitoring activity on your stall, then this will be easy!
* Remember, at a stall people are passers-by – just that – and many will not go straight to full level of engagement (such as pay for a course). More typically, people will be happy to get a little bit of information – such as take a flyer/fill in a form to go on a mailing list. You will be more successful, typically, if you seek a lower level of engagement from passers-by and build in a follow-up mechanism post-event.

Sources: <http://www.embark.com.au/display/public/content/Running+a+successful+street+stall>