

How To Promote Your Chapter

by

Jewett L. Walker, Jr.

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jewettwalker@earthlink.net

Announcing the publication of

How To Promote Your Chapter

the first book released as part of the

Omega Chapter Management Series

How to Promote Your Chapter will show you how to use the media to publicize your chapter's activities, how to build goodwill in your community, how to prepare a press release, how to produce a chapter newsletter, how to develop a chapter brochure, how to pull off a successful press conference and so much more. I can guarantee that if you read and apply the principles in this book, your chapter will see results immediately.

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As we cope with ever changing social, economic and political conditions nationally and in our respective communities, the old ways of doing business are no longer necessarily the best ways of doing business. As we fight to preserve our fraternal heritage and face ever increasing challenges to make Omega relevant to current needs, issues and concerns, we need a new set of tools. The Omega Chapter Management Series is designed to provide you with these new tools.

Other planned books are:

How to Manage Your Chapter

How to Build Your Chapter

How to Fund Your Chapter

How to Automate Your Chapter

How to Involve Your Chapter In Community Life

How to Run for Public Office

How to Keep Your Finances

How to Keep Your Records

How to Make an Impact On Young Black Males

Jewett L. Walker, Jr.

Editor and Publisher

The Omega Chapter Management Series®

For further information contact Bro. Jewett L. Walker, Jr.

4712 Admiralty Way #542 • Marina del Rey, CA 90292 • (310) 419.2982 • jewettwalker@earthlink.net

This book was written 14 years ago in 1995. Had it not been sabotaged by certain National Officers at that time, It would have moved this Fraternity to another level of Chapter effectiveness.

It is of course out of date and in need of updating and re-editing, which I will do later.

If anyone would like to contribute a chapter to this publication or contribute to one of the other Chapter Series, please feel free to contact me.

Upcoming areas for this publication will deal with using the internet, email blasts, websites, blogging, radio shows, cable access commercials, billboards, Facebook, Twitter, instant polling and proper submission protocols for articles to the Oracle.

Thank you and I hope it is helpful to you and your chapter.

Brother, Jewett L. Walker, Jr.
jewettwalker@earthlink.net

PUBLIC RELATIONS

Good public relations are essential to the growth of Omega and for the success of programs developed to carry out its purposes. The community will be more supportive of fund-raisers held by us if our goals and activities are known. People are more likely to make donations to, or become members of, a fraternity that has built a reputation for worthwhile objectives, special projects that enhance community life, brief business meetings followed by stimulating programs, and enthusiastic, friendly brothers.

It is essential that brothers recognize that effective public relations are ongoing, and consist of both *Internal* and *External* programs that involve all of them.

INTERNAL PUBLIC RELATIONS

FRIENDLINESS: Visiting brothers and brothers who attend meetings infrequently but who are financial must be welcomed at all meetings. They must not be left to sit in a corner by themselves or be ignored, ridiculed or belittled. All too often chapter brothers invite unfinancial or infrequent meeting attendees to meetings, only to have them refuse to become financial or active because they feel unwelcome. A reputation for unfriendliness and aloofness can spread throughout the brotherhood, with the result that a chapter may find it difficult to run an effective reclamation program. A chapter may also find it difficult to get support for its programs when it doesn't deal effectively with the public.

KEEPING MEMBERS INFORMED: Internal communication is the lifeline of a chapter. If members constantly complain they don't know what's going on, there is a breakdown in internal communication that needs

How to Promote Your Chapter

immediate correction. A membership directory and a calendar of events should be distributed to all brothers yearly and be presented to new brothers when they are initiated. A monthly or quarterly newsletter will keep chapter members up to date about current activities.

A telephone committee should be used to notify members of special meetings and events and to remind them about regularly scheduled meetings and activities. If your chapter membership exceeds 50 brothers I recommend mailing postcards to notify chapter members of emergency meetings, deaths, and other items of importance that are time sensitive and also require accurate information. The worst thing you can have happen is for the message to change from phone call to phone call with only a handful of brothers having the correct information. The Basileus and the KRS should keep extra labels handy for just such situations. Don't overwork yourself by trying to personally write a handwritten note to each member of the chapter. Remember time is of the essence. Make a master copy of the post card and have it printed at a quick copy shop like Kinko's. Avery Labels, available at most stationary and office supply stores has a set of post cards that can be printed through a laser printer, torn along the perforations and mailed immediately at the post card postage rate.

THE NEWSLETTER

The newsletter editor is in charge of writing, editing, and distributing the newsletter, monthly or quarterly, as directed by the Basileus or Executive Committee. This should be a separate function from Public Relations Chairman.

CONTENTS: Each newsletter should contain:

1. Brief message from the Basileus.
2. Notice of date, place, time and agenda for next meeting.
3. Announcements of coming activities, fund-raisers, exhibits, contests,

and new developments of interest to brothers.

4. Names, addresses, and telephone numbers of new brothers.
5. Brief reports on special events such as district meetings, conclaves, area meetings, undergraduate workshops, leadership conferences, etc.
6. Information on any pending or recently passed legislation pertaining to a chapter's purpose or activities.
7. Report on important decisions made by the Executive Board.
8. Honors to, or outstanding achievements of chapter members or prominent well known Omega Men regionally or nationally.

FORMAT: The newsletter must be clear, concise, attractive, and easy-to-read. Reduced type should not be used if there are any brothers in your chapter that are middle-aged or older (50+). It is better to edit or condense announcements than to crowd too many on a page.

PREPARATION OF A NEWSLETTER:

- 1 . Estimates of printing cost should be obtained from several printers if you are printing in excess of 100 copies. 100 copies printed offset should cost about \$20.00 plus 5 to 10.00 per halftone (photo). 100 copies printed on a high end copier with high photo resolution will cost you about 10.00 and you don't pay extra for halftones (photos). Consider photocopying to keep down cost. If you live near a Kinko's, I highly recommend you use them. If there is no Kinko's in your town, consider buying a franchise as a chapter run business enterprise. Present technology such as a Xerox Docutech can print out Xerox copies that are as crisp as offset printing. But you are limited to black ink. Spice things up by changing the color of the paper from time to time.
2. Estimate mailing cost. A 4 page 8 1/2 x 11 newsletter folded down to 5 1/2 x 8.5 will cost 32¢ to mail unless you are mailing at least 200 copies and have a bulk mail or nonprofit permit. (you can obtain both at your local post office)

How to Promote Your Chapter

3. Get authority from executive board, budget committee, or membership for expenses.
4. Make sure all brothers are informed of deadlines for mailing information. It is best not to take any items over the telephone. The possibility of error is too great.
5. Edit, check spelling of all names, and lay out material.
6. Type camera-ready copy on computer or typewriter.
7. Take copy to printer. Try to allow the printer a day or two extra.

DISTRIBUTION:

1. Mail to all financial brothers, unfinancial brothers and to any interested brother (district officer, national officer, supreme council member, national committee chairmen, officers of other chapter etc.) that the executive board places on the mailing list.
2. If the newsletter is distributed at meetings, the editor must see that brothers not in attendance also receive a copy.

EXTERNAL PUBLIC RELATIONS

WORD-OF-MOUTH PROMOTION: All brothers should consider themselves public relations agents of the fraternity. Enthusiastic word-of-mouth support is vital for promotion of fund-raising activities.

SPEECHES MADE BY OFFICERS: Omega Psi Phi is a fraternity with a rich tradition. We have a laudable charitable, social and educational purpose that can become better known in the community if the Basileus, officers and members of the executive board publicize its activities by making appearances before other groups. Program Chairman are always looking for speakers and most will welcome the person who desires to make a brief, informative presentation.

USE OF THE MEDIA: Wise use of newspapers, radio, and television must be directed by the public relations chairman. All chapters should have someone trained at the district or national level when such training becomes available.

BROCHURES: An attractive and easy-to-read brochure explaining the fraternity's purposes and activities should be available at all meetings and special functions. Our Greek letters and fraternity shield should be featured on the brochure.

ESSENTIALS OF A GOOD BROCHURE:

1. It must be attractive and eye-catching.
2. It must be easy to read.
3. It should feature the fraternity shield and Greek letters.
4. It should contain a description of the fraternity's purposes and activities.
5. It should list the officers and other members of the executive board.
6. It should be brief.
7. It should be inexpensive to reproduce (not cheap). Have style but be frugal.
8. It should be designed so that it can be reproduced on standard or legal-sized paper and folded for mailing. If you have brothers in your chapter who have special skills in this area then certainly use them.
9. It should be made available to the people whose support the fraternity desires to attract. Brochures kept in storage do no good.

DUTIES OF THE PUBLIC RELATIONS CHAIRMAN

Upon accepting the appointment, the chairman should confer with the Basileus, the program chairman, and anyone in the chapter who has helpful connections with the media to plan publicity for the coming

How to Promote Your Chapter

year. According to the fraternity constitution the KRS is responsible for public relations of the chapter, however I strongly recommend that in large chapters a separate brother be designated to handle this function. All publicity regarding the chapter should be released by the public relations chairman. This policy should be established by the executive board and clearly understood by all the members.

USE OF THE MEDIA

PRELIMINARY PROCEDURE:

1. Visit editors of local papers and discuss with them the purposes, cardinal principles, motto and history of the fraternity. It is best to make an appointment with the managing editor, the sports editor, or the editor of the community living or activities pages, depending on the activities of you plan on promoting. Avoid telephoning or calling upon an editor during the hours before the paper's deadlines.
2. Ask for the newspaper's policies regarding organizations like Omega Psi Phi and their deadlines for releases.
3. Find out if they will take a follow-up story and how they prefer that you arrange for pictures.
4. Investigate educational radio and television stations for the possibility of interviews with the chapter's officers about the programs, activities and projects your chapter is involved in or promoting.
5. Remember that metropolitan papers will print news of interest to a large segment of readers. Small town papers use news about leading individuals in the community, outstanding events, and notices of meetings.
6. Investigate the use of calendars of events sponsored by banks and business firms.
7. Consider advertising and get the rates.

8. Remember that columnists may be glad to get unusual items about your chapter activities or members. Mention in a column can attract more attention than a short news story.

Learn and Comply With Newspaper Usage:

1. Type and double space all copy.
2. Put your name and title, telephone number and the name of your chapter in the upper left hand corner.
3. Put the release date (the date you prefer to have the story used) or “for immediate release” in the upper right-hand corner.
4. Be concise and accurate.
5. Be certain all names are spelled correctly.
6. Who, what, when, where, why, and how are essentials of a news release. Put them into the first paragraph-the release may be cut.
7. Remember that names make news.
8. Do not send carbons or cheap photocopies. Editors are apt to ignore stories if they know the identical release is going to five papers in the area.
9. Provide facts, not opinions. Do not exaggerate, editorialize, personalize, or emotionalize. Use a news approach.
10. The editor cannot be asked to write the story. Write it yourself. (This is also true if you send to a District Newsletter or the Oracle) Do not send brochures or programs in place of a story.
11. Copy goes only to one editor per paper. Select the appropriate editor.
12. Do not tell editors how to use your stories. Keep relations on a cordial and friendly basis.
13. Observe Deadlines. Do not dash in at the last minute and expect that your story will be rushed into print.
14. Do not harangue the editor if a release is cut or omitted. Approach the editor in a friendly manner and ask for the reason, so that you may

How to Promote Your Chapter

rectify it, if possible. Remember that editors are human, and many organizations compete for limited space.

15. **Keep A Copy.** Newspapers can make mistakes. You may need your copy to convince an irate brother that you did not misspell his name.

Photographs:

1. Most newspapers will use photographs, from snapshot-size on up to eight by ten. Check with the editor to see if your local paper has a different policy.
2. Photographs must be clear black-and-white glossies with good contrast. Never send Polaroid's. If you have color photo's take them to a professional photo lab and have black & white glossy prints made from them (normally \$10.00 for the negative and \$2.00 for the print).
3. When a professional photographer—yours or the newspaper's—is used, have everything ready in advance. The people must be there and any props prepared. Give clear directions about date, time, and place, and include a telephone number where you can be reached.
4. If the photographs are being taken by a member of the fraternity, make certain the paper's requirements are understood. Supply the editor with several selections so that an appropriate choice can be made.
5. Action pictures, showing people doing things, are desired. Smiling faces are more pleasing. Identify people from left to right.
6. It is best to take outdoor pictures early in the morning or late in the afternoon. Avoid harsh noonday sun.
7. Supply a self-addressed, stamped envelope if you want photographs returned.
8. Photographs furnished by speakers or entertainers should be returned to them.

Sample Release

Lambda Omicron Chapter
Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc.
Brother Stalwart, Public Relations Chairman
(123) 426-4795

For Immediate Release

The Lambda Chapter of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc. will be holding its Annual Memorial program Saturday, March 14, 1996 at 1:00 P.M. at the Midtown Community Center, 1100 Main Street.

John Jones, Chairman of the Memorial services committee, will speak on "The Brothers Who Gave Their All." Jones, who was appointed last week to the District Breakup Commission, has an article, "Serving Your Community" in the February issue of Public Service Magazine. Every year during the month of March the fraternity honors it's members who have passed on.

Omega Psi Phi was founded November 17, 1911, and Lambda Omicron Chapter was founded in 1939. The public is invited to attend the services.

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How to Promote Your Chapter

PUBLICITY FOR FUND-RAISERS AND OTHER SPECIAL EVENTS

PLAN THE CAMPAIGN:

1. The publicity chairman should confer with the general chairman of the event four to six months in advance, to decide what kinds of publicity are needed.
2. Consider newspaper stories, community calendar announcements, paid advertising, flyers, posters, direct mail, and television and radio public service announcements.
3. The Chairman needs a committee when many avenues of publicity are being used. The committee assists with the design and distribution of posters and flyers, addressing envelopes for mailings, and stapling multiple page programs.

OBTAIN ALL NECESSARY INFORMATION: Get the purpose, event, date, time, place, price, speakers, entertainers, pictures and biographies, name and address of person in charge of reservations, and cut-off date for reservations. Information about souvenir book, sponsors or whatever.

PREPARE A NEWS RELEASE: Include the date of release, name of chapter, type of event, purpose, date, time, place, speaker, entertainers, or artists, name of Basileus, name of general Chairman, and ticket information. It is nice to send a complimentary ticket to the editor and to follow up with a thank you note.

Sample Release

Lambda Omicron Chapter.
Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc.
Brother Stalwart, Public Relations Chairman
(123) 426-4795

For Immediate Release

Lambda Omicron Chapter of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity will stage a wine-tasting fund-raiser September 14, 1996 from 6:00 P.M. to 9:00 P.M., at the Baldwin Hills Plaza, 100 M. L. King Blvd.

According to Co-Chairmen Jimmy Jam and Que Man, funds will be used to support the fraternity's annual scholarship program. Tickets may be purchased at all Ticket Master locations or by calling Jimmy Jam @ (310)555-1212 or Que Man @ (310) 766-2121

T-shirts with the Lambda Omicron scholarship insignia will be for sale, and wines, cheese and crackers will be featured, along with music by Ice Cube and Marilyn McCoo.

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How to Promote Your Chapter

FLYERS: These can be distributed, with permission, in libraries, museums, other public buildings, at meetings of related organizations, other Omega chapters in your community, passed out on the street, or mailed. Be sure all essential information is on the flyer, including directions if the location is hard to find.

MAILING LISTS can be obtained from members who submit names of friends; from the guest book people signed at previous events; by borrowing the mailing list of other organizations. Raffle stubs serve two purposes, the first purpose is to pick a winner but the second less obvious reason is to develop your own mailing list of supporters.

POSTERS should be attractive and eye-catching. Large, easy-to-read letters are a must. They are placed in stores, churches, libraries, lobbies of public buildings, banks, and on utility poles. Permission to display the poster must be obtained. In some cities, ordinances prohibit posting bills on utility poles. Be sure to check first. Give your chapter a favorable image by removing the posters the day after the event.

Radio and Television Announcements giving all essential information are written by the public relations chairman. Time allowed may be fifteen, thirty or sixty seconds.

Sample Radio & T.V. Release

The Lambda Omicron Chapter of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity will hold a giant used-book sale Saturday, August 11th, from 9 A.M. to 5 P.M., in the library parking lot, 7th and Main Streets. Proceeds from the sale will be used to buy a microfilm reader for the library. More information is available by calling (123) 456-7890.

CHAPTER PARTICIPATION: All members should assist in the publicity for a large event by making announcements to organizations to which they belong, by word-of-mouth publicity, and by telephoning their friends and colleagues.

PROGRAM: The design, layout, and printing of the program for an event may be part of the public relations chairman's duties. In some larger chapters this task is given to a program committee appointed for that purpose. An attractive cover enhances a program. The fraternity shield, a short history of the fraternity, its purpose, the names of chapter officers, general chairman, all committee chairmen, and committee members are included. Special acknowledgment is made of all merchants and individuals that have assisted with the event.

PRINTING: If a member has access to a Xerox machine, flyers, posters, and programs can be reproduced inexpensively with the group paying only the cost of materials. Bids from three printers should be obtained if the work is done by a commercial printer. In some localities it is best to use a union shop. Large events with program or souvenir books over ten pages should be commercially printed. Kinko's Copies a nationwide chain of fast copy shops with Desktop publishing facilities has a new digital copier that prints photos as well as some commercial offset shops and can produce some very sharp program books with photos.

PUBLICITY FOR SPECIAL EVENTS

Good publicity is essential for special events, such as one-day conferences, workshops, seminars, art fairs, etc., that are sponsored as cultural or educational contributions to community life. Information about these events must be distributed as widely as possible, so that the public will attend. On the other hand, the success of a state, district meeting or grand conclave depends upon getting information

How to Promote Your Chapter

about the programs and events planned to the fraternity members. The material should be presented in complete and exciting stories that will stimulate registration. A conclave or district meeting, however, may be newsworthy in itself, either because of action taken or resolutions passed by the fraternity, or because the speakers and/or entertainers are nationally known. Duties of the public relations chairman follow those outlined previously in this section. The following procedures will help the chairman to obtain additional publicity.

SERIES OF RELEASES: For a one-day or weekend conference, a release containing all details, including the speakers' names, can be sent to the paper a month in advance. This can be followed with weekly stories, giving background and qualifications in detail of one or two speakers. Glossy photographs should be included. A series of releases such as this should be discussed with the editor.

INTERVIEWS: Arrangements may be made for well-known speakers, entertainers and national officers to appear on television or radio or be interviewed by a reporter. Permission must be obtained from the persons to be interviewed. The editor or television or radio producer should be approached well in advance of the event. The persons responsible for educational and local television programs are more likely to be responsive than those producing major network shows. Transportation to the studio should be provided interviewees.

COVERAGE OF THE EVENT: Local newspapers can be invited to send reporters to conferences or seminars. The invitation should consist of a letter to the editor, inviting the paper to send a reporter. The purpose of the event, a program, the organization's brochure, and background material on the speakers should be included. If the speech is made from a head table following a meal, arrangements should be made for the reporter to sit at a table directly in front of the speaker. Advance

copies of speeches should be supplied, if possible.

PRESS ROOM: If members of the press are invited to cover a district meeting or conclave, a room should be made available for their use. The location should be close to the banquet and meeting rooms. Typewriters, paper, desks, chairs, and telephones should be provided. Hot coffee and rolls is a nice touch.

PRESS TABLE: A table should be reserved for the press, directly in front of the head table, when speeches are made at a luncheon or banquet. Meal tickets are furnished by the fraternity.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION about the fraternity, issues to be covered, national officers, candidates (if elections will be held), speakers, and entertainers should be given out to all reporters. Convention programs must be available.

PRESS CONFERENCE: if developments or announcements are important enough, or when election results are known, a press conference may be called. All reporters covering the event should be alerted in ample time to attend. The room chosen should be large enough so that it is not crowded. Adequate seating, lighting, and ventilation are essential. The public relations chairman should introduce the person who will make the presentation. Typed advance copies of the material should be distributed. The presence of members of the executive board, district council or supreme council or other members of the fraternity who can add to the presentation, give background material, or answer questions is desirable.

NEWSPAPER CLIPPINGS: Following any meeting, conference, special event, or convention, the public relations chairman sends newspaper clippings to all those who appeared on the program.

How to Promote Your Chapter

LIAISON WITH THE PRESS: The public relations chairman, or a member of the committee, should be available at all times, to answer reporters' questions and offer assistance. All news regarding the district meeting or conclave should be released by, or with prior approval of, the public relations chairman. Releases may be distributed by various committee heads and officers, but they must first be cleared through the chairman. This procedure prevents duplication and allows the chairman to coordinate press coverage.

To Be Continued

**Ideas, suggestions, comments & critiques
should be sent to:**

Jewett L. Walker, Jr.
5406 West 57th Street
Los Angeles, CA 90056
(310) 645-8666
(310) 645-4514 Fax

Walker Communications Group
1314 Westwood Blvd. Suite 101
Los Angeles, CA 90024
(310) 474-7418
(310) 474-6918 Fax

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A Note From the Author

Welcome to The Omega Chapter Management Series. This is the first in a series of How To books that will take you beyond mere knowledge of fraternity policies and procedures and allow you to develop a fuller set of skills to lead your chapter to greatness well beyond the year 2000.

As we cope with ever changing social, economic and political conditions nationally and in our respective communities, the old ways of doing business are no longer necessarily the best ways of doing business. As we fight to serve our fraternal heritage and face ever increasing challenges to make Omega relevant to current needs, issues and concerns, we need a new set of tools. The Omega Chapter Management Series is designed to provide you with these new tools.

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How to Make an Impact On Young Black Males

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5406 West 57th St. Los Angeles, CA 90056 • (310) 645-8666 • (310) 645-4514 Fax