

Public Relations is a toolbox. It contains ways & means tools to support implanting a concept in the mind and actions of a target audience. More importantly, it tailors the delivery to the audience for optimal effect.

As with any assortment of tools, some idea of what they do and how to use them helps in getting the most effective results.

I was fortunate to be of some small assistance to ZC Sharon Cain in the initiative to start a new club in Salmon Arm. This was done by utilizing a level of contact with the local media and a front page article on Lions for Salmon Arm in the online the Black Press - Salmon Arm Observer. This was only one small part of her plan however it did reach a number of people.

PR can be a 'growing process' as well. The previous year, (2024), Sorrento Lions, assisted by Enderby, Armstrong and North Shuswap Lions Clubs, a Salmon Arm Home Show booth was set up and Lions were in attendance. Many people were exposed to Lions and the concept of a local Lions Club was discussed. There was a very positive reception – to the point of people just donating money at the booth even though there was no hint of fundraising....

Most importantly in the above two efforts;

- 1) They utilized the positive development of awareness concept (Lions and what/where they do)
- 2) They weren't asking for anything – not fundraisers.

There are a lot of tools in the PR toolbox and ways/means to use them from analysis to determining the message/concept to implanting said concept are all available.

Great example: The jolly large gent with the white beard and red suit? Developed as a PR campaign by Coca-Cola. Where Mr. Klaus (Kringle/Nicholas etc) was known before? Thin and wore a green suit. It might be said the concept was well implanted....

Public Relations at times does 'work out of the traditional box' and although many say that's good; Is it really? As Lions do we really 'think/act outside the proverbial box? How many follow the corporate line though, while frequently satisfying the requirements, doesn't really achieve the target in some cases? How fast are membership numbers growing?

The bottom line:

Lions International has a lot of valid and potentially useful suggestions and guides but sometimes implementing these and maximizing the effort can be tweaked and 'personalized' for a club/community.

We need to remember what our objective is as Lions: *Darwin said it: Make more and increasingly effective Lions if we are to flourish as a species....*

PR is here to support and help from District to club level.

The Cabinet, Zone Chairs etc can drive this by getting the message to the clubs: Use the PR toolbox. Our District is new and covers an expansive area – we all need to be involved and support Lions.

Simply send a message to myself (PR Chair – intel1@telus.net)) and I will respond. Can look at a few ideas and how to utilize some effective contact techniques. Give the clubs some simple and less effort ways to reach their community.

Lorne Grigg
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