



StEPs-UT Audience

Community Relations: What You Could Do (a Few Ideas)

- 1) Be responsive to concerns
- 2) Collaborate and partner
- 3) Serve community needs

- Identify local opinion leaders & build relationships with them & their organizations.
 - Plan regular, year-round contact.
 - Add them to contact lists.
 - Participate in existing government relations & lobbying—UMA, OMS, UCA.
 - Who are some leaders you have relationships with? Who are some you could develop relationships with? What are the potential advantages to your museum?
- Arrange museum open houses & tours for residents & community members.
 - Who would you reach out to?
- Make museum facilities available for community events.
 - Who are some partners who help you fulfill the museum's mission and goals and/or reach important/new audience?
- Organize a speakers' bureau so museum leaders can participate in lecture programs sponsored by community organizations:
 - Face-to-face communications: speeches, presentations, etc.
 - Which organizations help you connect with influential audiences?
- Tie exhibitions & events to anniversaries/holidays important to community.
- Participate in community festivals & other established events your community values--offer enhanced programming/opportunities for fun & learning.
- Partner with other community talent & expertise to enliven/broaden interest in exhibits (through visual art, dance, music, etc.).
- Make traveling collection available in locations other than museum.
- Offer educational programs at schools, libraries, state parks, etc.
- Connect your focus to their interests--reflect their lives in your exhibitions, events, etc.
- Engage community in exhibition making, utilize community expertise.
- Approach school districts to:
 - Explore career development programs with special-needs students.
 - Offer students community service hours: assisting with landscaping or maintenance, customer service, administrative tasks, educational programs, tours & interp programs.
 - Important opportunity to invest in the community's youth as potential lifelong supporters.
- Be active in local organizations—Rotary Club, Kiwanis International, Chamber of Commerce, city or county visitors' bureau.
 - Hear local voices and gain a better understanding of community needs and how the museum can better position itself.
- Create affinity groups.
 - Researchers, enthusiasts.
 - Plan and present programs at your site for themselves & others.
 - Move from traditional role as history interpreter to experience facilitator.
- Be a designated polling place.

SOURCES: Kotler, Neil G., et. Al., *Museum Marketing and Strategy*, 2nd ed., John Wiley & Sons, 2008, Catlin-Legutko & Klingler, chapter 3, "Like a Good Neighbor: Community Advocacy for Small Museums," *Small Museum Toolkit: Museum Marketing*, Altamira Press, 2012, and Utah Museums Association.

10 ways to advocate for your museum this year

- 1 Identify your elected city, county & state officials
- 2 Learn about issues that are important in your community
- 3 Identify how your museum is uniquely qualified to tackle your community's issues
- 4 Record testimonials of why your museum deserves public support
- 5 Prepare specific, true stories about your museum's impact on your community
- 6 Prepare to discuss your museum's value (including financial), and defend beneficial work you do
- 7 Highlight recent successes (increasing visitor numbers, award-winning exhibitions, community partnerships, etc.)
- 8 Highlight areas for improvement/growth, and how sustained or one-time funding would support them (have dollar amounts ready!)
- 9 Get to know your community leaders and invite them to your museum
- 10 VOTE in elections and encourage others to do so as well

#utahmuseums