

## 101 Tips and Ideas... For Marketing and Promotions

By Jane Hanson, Marketing/Membership Coordinator

Many of you have been asking for more marketing and promotional ideas to get new members through your doors. And others have mentioned some really great ideas to me. This is a combination of many of your great ideas and a few of our own!\*

With 101 ideas to choose from, you are sure to find a few that appeal to you. When you do – do them. Take the action. Without action all the ideas in the world are useless! And let us know how it went for you.

Here we go...

1.	Button conversation-starters saying “Love to sing! Do you?” or “Love to sing?” or “Fun, Friendship, Harmony - Want some?” Try bumper stickers saying similar things.
2.	Advertise in your local telephone book – it will display for a whole year.
3.	Supply local restaurants with paper place-mats, with your message printed on.
4.	Conversation-starter T-shirts with “Ask me how...” or similar message to the Buttons. Also print up T-shirts showing general chorus logo and information.
5.	General Chorus business cards for everyone to carry and hand out. They can write their own names on the cards.
6.	Post flyers on the inside of the stall doors in the ladies bathroom. Try this at local community colleges, libraries, large corporations, department stores, etc. (Best request permission first.) And, leave business cards or flyers in ladies bathrooms wherever you go!
7.	Host a Mother and Daughter tea – give demonstration and talk about membership.
8.	Singing Christmas and Singing Valentines cards – sell your services.
9.	Sing carols at Christmas tree lightings – invite the press.
10.	Perform National Anthem at sporting venues.
11.	Turn up, in person, at TV breakfast shows and radio stations and volunteer to sing.
12.	MAKE FRIENDS with local radio and TV presenters – they can be very useful! If you know your arts editor loves M&Ms, hand deliver a media kit with a big bag of his/her favorite candy!
13.	Get regular weekly spot on radio stations.
14.	Collect funny, heartwarming member stories and compile into booklet – hand out to prospects, or offer as a “freebie” on your response slips to collect names. The booklet is a great give-away and “selling tool” for your chorus. Everyone loves reading real stories.
15.	Use “singing snippets” (interesting and fascinating facts about singing) in your advertising and flyers. Used in ads each publication, your readers will start looking

	for your next snippet. People are more likely to respond to an ad they've seen in the newspaper regularly.
16.	Karaoke bars and stores are GREAT places to leave/hand-out leaflet or leave posters and talk to people about singing.
17.	Movie theater advertising is quite affordable.
18.	Get together with other local choruses and share advertising costs.
19.	Search online for women's hobby Web sites and post letters and articles about your "hobby" and how much you love singing.
20.	Look for women's chat-rooms online to join and talk about being a Sweet Adeline.
21.	Buy a whole year of advertising in local free newspapers – they give massive discounts if you buy the whole year.
22.	Cheap, classified ads work – people do read small classified ads.
23.	Get your information on community news on local TV and radio.
24.	Maximize free advertising in "What's On" sections in local newspapers.
25.	WORD OF MOUTH – Talk to EVERYONE you know – and strangers too! Get husbands, relatives and friends to help spread the word, too!
26.	"Singer-Bringer" evenings when all members who bring a guest are entered into a prize draw, with a grand prize each month/quarter/year.
27.	Promote/advertise "FREE Singing Lessons" or "FREE Newcomer Classes", which could be less intimidating than "lessons".
28.	Contact local shopping malls to get singing assignments lined up throughout the year.
29.	FLYERS – FLYERS – FLYERS – hand out flyers CONSTANTLY <sup>1</sup>
30.	Tear-off slips on flyers – "Return slip for your FREE CD" or "FREE Concert Ticket" to collect names and addresses and build your prospect database.
31.	Keep database of all people you have ever had contact with and mail/email regularly (unless they ask to be removed from your list).
32.	Get your friendly grocery store to put your ¼ page sack-stuffers into all sacks
33.	Get regular articles in local newspapers – editors start to look for your piece when they have learned that you send something regularly.
34.	Find local women's hobby groups (Eg: sewing, beading, crafts) and exchange advertising in newsletters and on Web sites.
35.	Produce Demo CD <sup>2</sup> - get local media students to record and edit performances
36.	Hand out demo CDs to prospective members, or use as response-slip Free Gift to collect prospect names and details to build your prospect database.
37.	Send demo CD or tape of your chorus/quartet performing the National Anthem to local sports venues to get bookings.
38.	"Anything You Can Do I Can Do Better" evenings with SPEBSQSA choruses – they bring women, you bring men, whichever gender brings the most is the winner and the loser buys the pizza! Collect all names and contact to follow up.
39.	Take part in sponsored charity walks/rides/events, and wear your Sweet Adelines' T-shirt

40.	Offer a FREE 2 or 4 week Introductory Membership to prospects if they sign up “on the night”. On the night, she is invigorated and excited, it is easy to motivate her to join. If you offer her a Free Membership it is really is a no-brainer – she can’t lose. After that, signing up for real isn’t so daunting, and she will already feel a part of your chorus.
41.	Follow up with your prospect after a guest evening. Say something that relays the ideas: “Thanks for coming” and “Come back soon”. We need to encourage her to return. If possible, sign her up for a Free Introductory Membership (2 or 4 weeks) on the night.
42.	Contact local “Home Schooling” organizations to promote family singing and barbershop for singing lessons.
43.	Offer rehearsals at LUNCHTIME instead of evenings (most women could get one extended lunch each week, instead of getting home, and going out again in the evening). Try a “Coffee Concert/Rehearsal” at lunchtime with complimentary coffee and pastries. Alternatively, try a compact weekend rehearsal.
44.	Offer shorter, more intense rehearsals with less social-time (this suits younger women best and they can stay afterwards for fellowship if they wish).
45.	Hire a babysitter and offer babysitting to your members.
46.	Put up posters/flyers at local libraries.
47.	Add a “signature” to your e-mails talking about Sweet Adelines and singing.
48.	Put flyers up at church and leave business cards in the ladies’ bathroom at church.
49.	Put up a Display at the local library. I did this for one organization I was involved with and it generated significant public interest. Make it a 3D display if you can.
50.	Make a big, professional-looking display to exhibit during performances, with leaflet slots, a free prize draw box, photographs, invitations, etc.
51.	Ask every member in your chorus to sign up only ONE PERSON this year, and you will DOUBLE your chorus size!
52.	The little things DO count – every member has an impact on the group and CAN make a difference – let every member know they can make a difference to their chorus.
53.	At your performances, hold a prize draw for a Free CD, or a Gift Basket, or a Massage, (or anything you can get cheap or free!). Have flyers on hand telling about your chorus; asking questions to find out if they enjoyed the performance, if they enjoy singing themselves, etc. and include tear-off slip at bottom. Visitor completes slip and places into box. The point is: You Keep The Contact Details! Then you can write to these people, and keep in contact with them. <sup>3</sup>
54.	Launch a regular Newsletter for prospective members in your database – include an invitation to attend as a guest, stories of how much fun it is to be a member, vouchers for free Demo CDs, etc. Aim to get the prospect through your door! <sup>3</sup>
55.	Make sure to ALWAYS collect email addresses.
56.	Save money by e-mailing as many newsletters as possible.
57.	Find someone who can build a Web site for your chorus – most teenagers know how to build Web sites – your Web site is your full-color electronic brochure.

58.	Request a link from the Sweet Adelines International Web site to yours.
59.	Make sure all business cards, flyers and literature mention your Web site.
60.	Launch FREE emailed newsletter from your Web site to collect email addresses.
61.	Include regular changes to your site to encourage visitors to return – Eg: weekly letter from your Director; weekly article; free classified ads; anything you can think of that would make a visitor want to return regularly.
62.	Introduce a chat room to your site, open to everyone – when prospects get involved with the chat, they start to feel a part of your chorus – it’s a shorter step for them to join.
63.	Submit your Web site to all the major search engines.
64.	Get links from other related sites, such as women’s hobby sites, local business Web sites, etc.
65.	Hold TALENT SHOWS for the public and pick out your future members – promote in all local media
66.	Put baskets with freebies like soap, shampoo, etc., in a basket in the local women’s health clubs and gyms with chorus fliers in them.
67.	Make sure all members speak positively at all times about their experiences with their chorus – if someone at work overhears your member saying how exhausting the rehearsal was last night, she is not likely to want to find out more. If your member frames this more positively, she could say something like, “Wow! What a challenging and fun rehearsal we had last night!”
68.	Remind members how much fun it is to be a Sweet Adeline, even though they do work hard, so they’ll want to mention it to others.
69.	Constantly remind members of how much they’ve learned and how far they’ve come since they joined – make them proud, so they want to talk to people about their achievements.
70.	Contact local charities and women’s organizations and perform for them.
71.	Contact local businesses who employ plenty of women, and do Brown-Bag Lunch Performances for them (you perform for free, the employees bring their own lunch).
72.	Wear membership jewelry at all times, it can start conversations and says that you are proud to be a member.
73.	Hang chorus pictures in your office (conversation-starter) and carry one in your purse.
74.	Use Sweet Adelines pens, Post-Its, Mugs etc at work – this could be a conversation starter.
75.	Give card-stock signs to all members to place in the windows of their cars, or homes, for a period of time.
76.	Give each member twenty chorus postcards (with chorus photograph on front, and brief write-up on reverse including “Freebie” offer to collect names) to send out or give to people they know.
77.	Hand out Promotional Literature (available through International Sales) to all members, and encourage them to give literature to prospects.
78.	Make sure press releases/articles are addressed to a specific person at the media – do your research, it pays off!
79.	Sell advertising in your newsletters to local businesses and get sponsorship.

80.	Get prospects to sign up ON THE NIGHT – the chances of them doing so, when they are still awestruck from your fantastic performance or rehearsal, are much greater than when they have walked away! Offer them the Free Introductory Membership, which is really a “no-brainer”. Sign them up as a trial, when it’s time to sign up for real they will feel comfortable with the chorus and want to stay.
81.	Get sponsorship from local businesses, and announce or display your sponsor at performances and in literature.
82.	Research grants and donations for which your chorus may be eligible .
83.	Hand out promotional flyers and business cards to everyone who buys tickets for your performances.
84.	Leave The Pitch Pipe (with flyer or business card attached) at doctors waiting rooms, beauty salons, hairdressers, dental offices, OBGYN clinics... anywhere women frequent (obtain The Pitch Pipe from International Sales for only \$15 for thirty copies).
85.	Ask local businesses to sponsor your chorus by tagging your information at the end of their advertising spots.
86.	Ask large companies in your area to include a voucher for Free Singing Lessons, Newcomers Lessons, or performance tickets, etc. in their employee payroll envelopes.
87.	Get local cable television stations and utility companies to include your chorus information as bill stuffers, newsletters, etc.
88.	Offer a free concert/demonstration as an educational opportunity for local schools. The concert can either be a field trip or held in the school.
89.	Find a local car dealership to help you advertise a “test drive” promotion. With each test drive (by a woman) the customer gets a Free “test drive” voucher to attend a chorus rehearsal or performance. Ask the dealership to tag their advertising with the promotional information.
90.	If you have a championship quartet in your region, send publicity about them to local media, and include your chorus information. Setup radio interviews and television appearances for the champion quartet and your chorus can tag along.
91.	Chorus members could host a “prelude party”. They invite their friends over to hear a live barbershop quartet perform, at a casual party and, at the same time, promote Sweet Adelines’ membership.
92.	Partner with local charities such as Toys for Tots, Coats for Kids, food banks, etc. Offer discounts or free tickets for donated items. Get extensive local media coverage.
93.	Promote your chorus to city officials and chamber of commerce. Position your chorus as one of the city’s premiere arts groups and local attractions. Make sure that your chorus is included in all city publications, Web sites and visitor guides as a main attraction.
94.	Offer group discounts on tickets to your performances. Promote these discounts to clubs, civic groups, large local companies, etc.
95.	Create “wacky” radio station promotions that give your chorus media and community attention. Eg: “Best Singing Dog” contest. Invite people to bring their singing dog to a popular, high-traffic location. Set up small stage and ask radio station to broadcast the event. Be creative – radio stations will give you free publicity if you come up with a crazy promotion that will get listeners and the community involved.
96.	Partner with other arts groups in purchasing co-op print advertising. A full page advertisement in a local paper or magazine may be cost prohibitive, but splitting

	the cost evenly between three or four arts groups can make it affordable.
97.	Trade mailing lists with local clubs, arts groups, civic groups, etc. You are not in direct competition and may have a similar audience to target members.
98.	Get creative and wacky with your press kits. Along with the sheets of paper, include CDs, copies of The Pitch Pipe, sequins, dolls, food items, etc. Have fun with the items in the kit.
99.	Perform on Mother's Day at a local park, zoo, mall etc. It would be ideal if the concert were free to the community and advertised as a special Mother's Day Concert. Guests are encouraged to bring the entire family and a picnic. For the last song, invite all the ladies to sing with you. Take the opportunity to promote your chorus.
100.	Brainstorm with your chorus for ideas – it is AMAZING what a group of women can come up with in a positive, no-idea-is-too-stupid session!
101.	Perform really, really well!!! Your performance is your best advertisement!

\*BIG THANKS! go out to all those who contributed to this article.

<sup>1</sup> Do not put flyers inside mailboxes (this is illegal), but attach them to the flag on the outside of the box.

<sup>2</sup> Contact HQ Music Services Department for copyright and other legal questions on 800-992-7464.

<sup>3</sup> Be sure to include an option to "Unsubscribe".

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