

Public Image

As I further my Rotary journey, I will identify opportunities to promote the image of my club and Rotary to the benefit of my community and world.



Session Goals

- Explore how my club can benefit from a Public Image Strategy
- Identify my club’s target audience and how we can effectively reach them
- Relate the goals of Public Image in the Rotary club to the Strategic areas in the Rotary International Action Plan
- Learn how to apply the “Rotary Brand” to the benefit of my club.

Resources

- Public Image Case Study PDF
- Rotary Logos & promotions – Rotary Brand Center <https://brandcenter.rotary.org/en-us>
- Rotary Core Values PDF (developed in 2017)
- Rotary Vision Statement & Strategic Priorities PDF (good until June 2024)
- Rotary Learning Center – Club Public Image Committee Basics

Summary:

- The club's public image can affect the credibility of the club, as well as your membership.
- Publicity is more than just press releases.
- A wealth of resources are available from Rotary International.

Public Image Case Study

Read the following case study and create a public image plan for the Rotary Club of Royal Gardens. Focus on three or four ways the club can reach out to the media and to the community directly to share its projects. Consider the questions below as you develop your plan.

The Rotary Club of Royal Gardens is located in a prosperous town of 35,000. The club's 40 members are a cross-section of the Royal Gardens professional community. The club's weekly program attracts prominent local speakers, and members are enthusiastic about their work in the community.

The club provides support for the community's growing elderly population. Through this ongoing project, club members prepare and deliver meals, arrange for home repairs, and visit residents who have been admitted to the hospital.

The club also helps to identify candidates for a Rotary Peace Fellowship. One scholar is studying the effects of global warming on ocean water levels and corresponds regularly with the club to inform members of her experiences.

Despite all their good works in the community, a survey indicated that few people in the community are aware of the club's efforts. Some respondents reported they perceive Rotary as a social club for older men. This image of the club has made it difficult to attract new, younger, and diverse participants.

1. Verbalize the problem.
2. What aspects of the club's current activities might interest the media?
3. Which type of media is most appropriate for each aspect? Why?
4. How might regular club programs be of interest to local media?
5. Other than Public Image, what other committees should be involved in solving this problem?
6. Many people would say this problem is in the hands of ALL members of the club. What could EVERY club member do to solve the problem? How can the Public Image Committee help in this regard?

Public Relations Writing

The ability to write easily, logically, and succinctly is essential for public relations. The object of most PR writing is to grab the reader's attention, convey information quickly, and invite the media to cover your story.

Inverted pyramid. Most press releases and other written communications for the media use an inverted-pyramid style, with the most important and relevant information at the top, followed by gradually less important information. The headline and the first sentence are the two most important parts of a press release. Make sure they're compelling enough to draw in the editor or reporter.

The five Ws. Include the five Ws in your first paragraph, ideally in the first sentence:

- **Who?** The main focus of your story; a person or group at the center of the story
- **What?** The event or project with which your club is involved
- **Where?** The location of the event, including a street address
- **When?** The time, day, and date of an event, or the time period involved for a person or project
- **Why?** The reason the event, person, or project is significant to the general public

In subsequent paragraphs, provide details about the event or project, or describe how the person or group achieved something extraordinary.

Beyond the press release. Rotarians can communicate stories to the media in many other ways, such as:

- **Media alerts.** Time-crunched newsrooms appreciate a media alert, a more condensed version of a press release. Ideal for upcoming events or reminders, just answer the five Ws in bullet format, and send the alert to media contacts.
- **Letters to the editor.** The editorial page is one of the most-read sections of the newspaper, and a letter can reach many people. Use the templates from RI to get started.
- **Op-eds.** An op-ed is an opinion piece written by an individual who isn't on the newspaper's staff. Before writing an op-ed for your paper, learn what topics are of interest to your community.
- **Media kits.** Prepare a special folder that holds general information about Rotary and your club as well as materials tailored to the event.
- **Fact sheets.** Fact sheets provide details about Rotary programs to ensure that journalists have accurate background information.



ROTARY'S VISION STATEMENT

TOGETHER WE SEE A WORLD
PEOPLE UNITE AND TAKE ACTION
TO CREATE LASTING
CHANGE ACROSS THE GLOBE
IN OUR COMMUNITIES AND IN OURSELVES

As we stand on the cusp of eliminating polio, we find ourselves poised for our next challenge. The time is right to move toward realizing a new vision that brings more people together, increases our impact, and creates lasting change around the world.

To achieve the vision of Rotary International and The Rotary Foundation, we have set four priorities that will direct our work over the next five years.

ROTARY'S STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND OBJECTIVES

INCREASE OUR IMPACT

- Eradicate polio and leverage the legacy
- Focus our programs and offerings
- Improve our ability to achieve and measure impact

EXPAND OUR REACH

- Grow and diversify our membership and participation
- Create new channels into Rotary
- Increase Rotary's openness and appeal
- Build awareness of our impact and brand

ENHANCE PARTICIPANT ENGAGEMENT

- Support clubs to better engage their members
- Develop a participant-centered approach to deliver value
- Offer new opportunities for personal and professional connection
- Provide leadership development and skills training

INCREASE OUR ABILITY TO ADAPT

- Build a culture of research, innovation, and willingness to take risks
- Streamline governance, structure, and processes
- Review governance to foster more diverse perspectives in decision-making

ROTARY'S CORE VALUES

The world today is not the same as it was when Rotary was founded in 1905. Demographics have shifted, the pace of change has accelerated, and technology has created new opportunities for connection and service. What hasn't changed is a need for the values that define Rotary:

FELLOWSHIP
INTEGRITY
DIVERSITY
SERVICE
LEADERSHIP

By honoring our past and embracing our future, we can evolve and keep Rotary not only relevant, but thriving.



rotary.org/actionplan