



# Passion into Action: Telling Your Story

Before, during, and after you serve, take time to tell your story. What are you doing? Why? What's the impact or potential impact?

Publicity for your cause is essential. It can raise awareness of the issue, lead to possible community-generated solutions, boost support and sponsorship; and inspire people to take action.

You have lots of choices on how to publicize your message, including:

- Flyers, posters, or banners
- Media campaigns
- Press releases
- Mass email distribution
- Online social networks, forums, and blog sites
- Public announcements at local events

Make use of viral marketing, a technique that leverages people to spread a marketing message to others, creating potential for exponential growth in the message's exposure and influence. Consider these tips for using viral marketing to publicize your activities, gain support, and secure resources:

- **Use word-of-mouth.** Once you have a core group of supporters, they will be your best resource for advertising and recruiting others. Think six degrees of separation: With a team of people talking about your cause and message, individuals can spread the word to many more people using their social networks than you can as one person.
- **Utilize more online and fewer printed materials.** Use online social networking services, such as Facebook, Twitter, and MySpace. Post blogs, videos, pictures, and news updates as quick and effective marketing strategies—for free! These online outlets facilitate 24-7 streams of communication and accessibility which have notably increased civic mobilization and action.
- **Highlight and connect the benefits of service** to people's own motivations so they find personal value in engaging others.
- **Tap into existing networks** in the local area, such as neighborhood association, college campuses, clubs, fraternities/sororities, or community centers.

## Passion into Action: **Telling Your Story, cont.**

The viral nature of the Web increases your ability to communicate quickly and effectively to thousands of people. By sharing information about something important to you through online social networks and content-rich media, such as blogs and videos, your messages are searchable and can be seen by anyone using the internet.

As people actively respond to postings with their own questions, answers, and opinions, your message can become self-sustaining thus increasing your chances for new and continued support. Your job is to start the conversation.

Do you already have a Facebook, MySpace, or Twitter account?

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What is the primary reason you visit these sites?

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Do you use it for networking about service? If not, how can you use it for your service efforts?

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