



# Public Relations Guidebook

## Basics of Public Relations



Good public relations (PR) has the power to boost your image, high-light your Key Club's achievements, and improve communications with the community.

When you tell your club's story through the media, newspaper reports, flyers, websites or social media, you boost your Key Club's visibility and credibility. Getting the word out about what your Key Club does can define your club in positive terms and position it as an important resource in your community.

"Widespread public recognition will benefit your club in many ways," said Kristian Little, past Kiwanis International public relations specialist.

"With members, it can build pride that leads to better attendance, greater participation in projects and stronger retention. In school, it can help draw new members," he continued, "and in the community, it can definitely make it easier to solicit public support for Key Club projects and fundraisers."

### Key Steps to a Good Public Relations System

**Evaluate:** Review all methods of PR used throughout the past years. Also, conduct club surveys to see what medium your members pay attention to the most.

**Establish goals:** Establish a plan of

action for the ways you will be approaching PR in your club.

**Use Resources Available:** On the District website

([floridakeyclub.org](http://floridakeyclub.org))

and Key Club

International website

([keyclub.org](http://keyclub.org)), there

are an abundance of

graphics and resources to help you

succeed in your PR tasks. If you

have any questions about public

relations, contact your Lieutenant

Governor or the District Editor at

[editor@floridakeyclub.org](mailto:editor@floridakeyclub.org).



### P.U.M.P. Up your Writing

**PUT YOURSELF IN YOUR READERS' SHOES**

- Think about your audience: Who are you writing for? How will they be reading this?
- Avoid abbreviations. By using constant abbreviations and acronyms, you will make the readers who are unfamiliar with the abbreviation frustrated and confused.

**USE NUMBERS**

Numbers attract the reader and are effective at getting a point across simply. **MAKE IT ACTIVE**

- Use present tense or future tense when possible in headlines.
- By using action verbs, you grab the reader's attention.

**PULL OUT A THESAURUS**

- Use interesting or intriguing adjectives, as long as you fully understand their meanings.
- "funny ———> amusing, hilarious

- “nice”——> amiable, easy-going, friendly
- “small”——> tiny, miniscule.

## **Posters and Flyers**

Walking down school hallways, it's impossible to not notice the posters hung along the walls advertising various clubs and events. Posters and flyers are excellent ways to promote your club throughout your school and community.



Whether the handouts and posters are printed or done by hand, they both do the job effectively. One easy way to create posters and flyers for your club is to have a simple service project during a meeting to create promotional items. Not only will members be happy to get service hours during a meeting, but this project is also a fun event and meeting, and also as a recruitment tool to encourage others to join.

For flyer/brochure templates, check out the following links:

<http://floridakeyclub.org/wp-content/uploads/FL-KC-flyer-1.pdf>

<http://floridakeyclub.org/wp-content/uploads/FL-KC-flyer-2-1.pdf>

[http://www.keyclub.org/Libraries/design elements/Template KeyClub Recruitment brochure.sflb.ashx](http://www.keyclub.org/Libraries/design%20elements/Template%20KeyClub%20Recruitment%20brochure.sflb.ashx)

When creating your own posters or

flyers, keep in mind the following tips:

- Use clear, bold, and easy-to-read fonts (should be within Key Club graphic standards).
- Make sure it is concise and includes the date, time, and place of the meeting/event.
- Keep it simple and uncluttered.
- Post signs in the school corridors, bath-room stalls, classrooms, cafeteria, front office, and library.
- Include the purpose of Key Club (after all, we are a service organization and do not just make keys).

## **Digital PR**

During this day and age, it is now common to use a variety of electronic media outlets for promotion. Sending emails to members or creating a Remind Text System are often effective ways of communication.

Whenever you are sending something electronically, proof-read, proof-read, and proof-read. Do not just assume autocorrect will catch everything. When emailing, the subject line is key. The subject line should accurately describe the event and be eye-catching. When you are writing emails to send to your club members, make sure to format your email so that the text is in **short paragraphs**, separated by blank lines. Most people find unbroken blocks of text boring, or even intimidating. Take the time to format your message for the ease of your reader.

When using texts to communicate with your members, remember to keep the content of the text short and to the point. Don't think of what you want to say; think of what the reader needs to know.

### **Social Media**

Social media is a big presence in the average teen's life. Use this to your advantage! Your club can use social media to share follow-up pictures, and engage members with reminders and promotional items for your club.

**Facebook:** If your Key Club has a Facebook group, posting on the page is one of easiest forms of promotion. Your members will get a notification that they can easily view from any device. On Facebook, you can also create events and invite people to like or RSVP. You can also share photos, information and videos all in one location.

**Twitter:** Twitter is also a popular method of social networking. Thousands of users use the site every day, including Key Clubbers. With Twitter, you can send short event reminders that can be easily retweeted or create a club hashtag for members to use when they post pictures from projects. When you are promoting your events with Twitter, you will want your event to stand out. Aim to tweet something humorous or engaging when promoting an event to grab the

reader's attentions.

**Instagram:** Your club can use Instagram to post meeting and event reminders in a fun and engaging way through pictures. It is also an easy way to showcase your members and your service projects as a follow-up after events.



### **Reaching Out in the Community**

Has your club done something great that you want to share with your local media? Compile a list of local newspapers, websites, newsletters, radio stations, cable outlets and television stations that provide news in your community, and contact them to spread the word about the difference your Key Club is making. Find contact information (usually available on the media outlets' websites) for each one.

Once you have reached a news outlet, be respectful of the reporter or editor's time; ask if they are on deadline and would prefer that you call back another time.

If they are able to talk, introduce yourself and give a brief background on why you are calling.

When you are contacting a newspaper, news channel, or radio station, make sure to contact them far in advance of the project and to provide full details about the event and about your Key Club.

To find templates for news releases, check out this link:  
<http://www.keyclub.org/fad/cm/prtools.aspx>

## **Newsletters**

Newsletters are a great promotional tool to use to inform members and your school of what your club is doing. While creating your newsletters, make sure to have a catchy title (Ex: Lily's Letters), plenty of graphics and pictures, and interesting articles to attract and keep your readers. People like to see their names and pictures in print, so try to feature your members as often as possible.

Please remember to use Key Club graphic standards throughout your newsletters.

To make it easier each time you create newsletters, here is a simple checklist to make sure that you are including everything that is needed.

- Important dates
1. Upcoming events
  2. Officer information
  3. Meeting schedule
  4. Service project dates and information
  5. Recap of completed projects
  6. Committee updates
  7. President's message
  8. Major Emphasis information
  9. District Project Information

## **Graphic Standards**

Graphic standards are Key Club International graphics (the pencil, logos, wordmarks, etc.) that help

10. Reminders
11. Dues Update
12. Florida District and Key Club International Logos

make the face of Key Club consistent and unified. A Key Club Graphic Standards PDF can be found at this website:

<http://www.keyclub.org/Libraries/Communications and Marketing/Guide Key Club 2015 Brand Guide.sflb.ashx>

You can also find graphics at:  
<http://floridakeyclub.org/logos-page/> and  
<http://www.keyclub.org/fad/cm/de.aspx>.



## **Photography**

Taking quality photos is very important in Public Relations. Keep in mind these tips when pulling out your camera:



- Action shots are more meaningful than staged group photos.
- Keep the background simple. Make sure the background doesn't distract from the subject and that nothing behind the subject affects the image.
- Make sure your subject stands in the best light—it might be bright out,

but the sun can cast shadows on a face. Think about your lighting.

- Capture faces in your pictures; expressions, reactions, moments, emotions and action make great photos. Make sure to focus on people's faces when taking the picture. Ensuring that each person can be identified in a picture heightens the quality of the image.

### **Membership Drive**

Although club members should always be on the lookout for students who would make good Key Clubbers, Key Club International recommends that your club have two membership drives. One occurring at the beginning of your school year, the fall drive, and one occurring at the end of your school year, the spring drive. Your Key Club should host a membership drive in the spring to ensure that your club will be active in the summer and successful in the upcoming school year. The following tips will ensure that your club hosts a successful club membership drive:

- **Establish Goals.** Determine the number of new members you are striving for. Provide incentives for present members for bringing new members.
- **Advertise.** Make sure that when members you set up your recruitment drive, the entire student body is aware of it. Have reminders for the drive on school

announcements, flyers, and posters. Also make sure the location of your Key Club recruitment event is at a highly-trafficked area like the lunchroom or a courtyard. At the table, be sure to also have flyers describing when your meetings are and what Key Club is for potential members.

- **Follow up.** Make sure to keep in contact with the potential new members. If you got the students' emails or phone numbers at the recruitment booth, send a message a day or two before the next meeting reminding them about the time and location of the meeting.

### **Videos**

Including video clips on your club website or in electronic newsletters is a powerful way to make Key Club activities come alive for your members. You can either show a video at your club meeting, during your recruitment drive, share through social media, or embed one on your club's website or newsletter. You can either create your own club video or use a video on the Florida Key Club YouTube Channel or Key Club International YouTube Channel. Also, by accessing The Eliminate Project website, you can find videos describing the projects and the effects of MNT. Videos are a useful and engaging public relations tool that can be used to spread the word and understanding of Key Club.



## **Building a Website**

A club website is not only a great resource for club officers and members, but it also serves as a great place to disseminate information to the public. In most clubs, the job of maintaining a website is usually delegated to the club editor; however, some clubs do choose to add a webmaster to their board to keep up with the responsibility of a club website.

Many people associate developing a website with lines and lines of code that might as well be in another language. While this may have been the case about ten years ago, there are many different ways to build a website without having to know how to code at all!

One of the most popular options is a Wordpress website. Wordpress is a free, easy to use, blog host that allows you to create highly-detailed and content-rich websites. To get started, make an account at Wordpress.com, then choose the URL for the website. Make sure to keep the URL name simple; don't make it too long where people will forget it but also avoid making it too short- then people will get lost in all of the acronyms.

No matter what platform you choose to host your website (do your research!), the most important aspect of any website is its content. Keep articles/pages full of fun and interactive graphics, be generous with your use of colors, and only use

enough text as needed to get your message across.

When people either stumble upon your website or purposefully visit it, they want to be able to find what they are looking for fairly quickly. Create menus of pages organized in alphabetical order and shy away from clutter. In your menus, categorize your pages into families of pages. For example, why have two separate pages for The Eliminate Project and The Children's Miracle Network when you can have one Major Emphasis Program's page with both The Eliminate Project and The Children's Miracle Network as subpages? By giving larger categories of options and breaking them down into smaller, more specific pages, you'll make your club's website a breeze to navigate.

Another useful function of your website is to have a widget dedicated to your club's Facebook or Twitter feeds. This will help integrate all of your club's media outlets.

To complete your website, make sure to include links to the District and International websites, provide contact information for all of your club officers, and make sure that each page is free of grammatical or spelling errors. If you should ever need help with creating, designing, or managing a website, contact the District Webmaster at [webmaster@floridakeyclub.org](mailto:webmaster@floridakeyclub.org) .