

5 Steps To Putting Together a Promotional Plan

I. Work together.

- ❑ Churches working together sends a powerful message of unity.
- ❑ Pooling resources enables resources to be used more effectively and achieve more.
- ❑ Joint events and initiatives are more successful in gaining press coverage.
- ❑ Joint advertising makes a bigger impression – potential guests can see that the Alpha course is widespread and it's easier for them to see all the different courses, locations and timings in an area so they can find one that suits them.

II. Plan an advertising and PR strategy in advance.

- ❑ Hold a meeting for all those involved in organising Alpha events in your area – an Equip & Refresh day or Open Meeting is an ideal opportunity. Together you will have a complete picture of Alpha in your area and from this you can begin to develop an advertising strategy. Please do speak to the Alpha UK team if you are interested in holding an Equip & Refresh day or Open Meeting.
- ❑ Appoint an advertising and PR team to put the plan into action – get lots of people involved.
- ❑ Choose a spokesperson who can easily be contacted by the press to answer questions about Alpha in your area.

III. Use the current 2007-8 Alpha Invitation publicity materials.

Using the same promotional material and images across the country helps to reinforce the advertising of other Alpha courses and to contribute towards raising national awareness of Alpha. As potential guests become familiar with Alpha, it is easier to invite them to a course. See the Resources page of uk.alpha.org/runningcourse and the Alpha Publications Brochure.

IV. Repeat, repeat, repeat.

Seeing and hearing a message over and over has the greatest impact. Combine lots of different forms of advertising and PR.

V. Get to know your local media and think about what might make a good story.

Find out the different publications that are produced in your area. When planning your Alpha events, have in the back of your mind how it could make a story for the press. See 'Using PR To Promote Local Alpha Courses' for information on getting an article into the local press.

- ❑ Interesting venues and situations will capture the imagination of editors and readers. Here are some examples from previous years:
 - Old Trafford Football Club
 - Curry House, Crawley
 - Steam Ship, Ullswater
 - Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst
- ❑ Invite local celebrities, high profile church leaders, your MP, local councillors and prominent business people to your Alpha launch event. Assign somebody to host these guests for the evening who will be able to chat to them and explain more about the aims of the evening and your Alpha course.
- ❑ Prepare a press pack to give to the media, including the key messages about Alpha, a local fact sheet and photos with captions that they could include. See 'Using PR to Promote Local Alpha Courses'.