



Marketing Your Fire Safety Program

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Learning Objective: The student will be able to describe the four P's of a marketing plan.

There are many reasons why a fire safety program is developed for a community. No matter the reason behind the program, the intended audience must be convinced of the need for the program and motivated to participate in it.

What is Marketing?

The American Marketing Association defines marketing as “the process of planning and executing the conception, pricing, promotion and distribution of ideas, goods and services to create exchanges that satisfy individual and organizational objectives.”

Marketing helps you decide whom you want to influence, reach your target audience, and determine how to sway people to change their behavior. Marketing is more than just selling. It is everything your organization does to transfer your “product” (your service) to your “customer” (the public).

Developing a Marketing Plan

A marketing plan for your program will communicate its benefits, which include lives saved, injuries prevented, property protected and expenses avoided. Marketing principles are the same no matter what you are trying to promote. It comes down to one basic principle: changing people's behavior. Make your messages easy to understand. Repeat those messages in a variety of ways to reach the largest audience. Use the four P's of marketing:

- **Product:** What is the desired action that you are asking your audience to take? What kind of program will you be providing?
- **Price:** What is the cost, or what loss can be prevented by participating? How much time and effort will your audience have to expend to participate? Are benefits to participants greater than their costs?
- **Place:** Where will the audience perform the desired behavior, or where will your program take place? Will you make presentations at elementary schools or conduct home safety visits?
- **Promotion:** How will you use direct communication, social media, publicity and advertising to reach your audience and encourage participation in your program?

Make sure that you develop a marketing plan for your programs to be successful.

The source for this material is Fire Safety Program Toolkit: A Comprehensive Resource for Fire Safety Educators, which can be downloaded from http://www.usfa.fema.gov/downloads/pdf/publications/fire_safety_program_toolkit.pdf.