

# **CROQUET VICTORIA**

## **MARKETING AND PUBLICITY**

### **ON-LINE TOOL KIT**

*The marketing and publicity of a Club can be categorized into the following promotional activities.*

*Every Croquet Club will have a subjective view of how these activities can assist to promote the sport and their club. It will depend on the size of the club, location, club and member's needs etc. However, at some point all these opportunities should be taken into account and considered for the growth of croquet in Victoria and the long term health of individual clubs.*

### **CLUB SIGNAGE**

One of the most important aspects of a croquet club is the sign it displays at the facilities. The sign should “sell” the sport and the club. It must be clearly visible and able to be read from a distance by passing traffic. A club may require more than one sign. Much thought should be put into it.

Consider: Size of sign/s. Position of sign/s. Size of lettering. Colours. Message should include phone contact/s and perhaps playing times. It must be a sign that ensures a prospective player/member or visitor is welcome.

### **CLUB EVENTS**

- Tournaments
- Fixtures

These club events should be promoted as coming events on the Club's Facebook page. As well, the local newspaper should be aware. A club should never pre-judge the newspaper's editorial requirements in any classification (ie sport, social or other). Newspapers need content.

- Come & Try Days

These are excellent avenues to promote the club and the sport on Facebook, through local community groups, community radio and all local media outlets.

- **Social Days**

Social days are croquet club days when visiting clubs come to play socially. They are perfect for photographs that can be posted on social media and also sent with details to the local newspaper

- **Special Events**

One example could be the use of the courts for practice by teachers from local schools who wish to compete in the Teachers' Games. Promote this practice in the local paper and on the club's Facebook.

- **School Programs**

Local schools can be approached to arrange for students to learn how to play croquet...either at the school or at the club courts. Again, an opportunity to promote through the local media as well as the school newsletters.

Croquet Victoria to establish a pathway to attract young people to participate in Under 21 championships and tournaments.

- **Regional locations....Sports Assembly activities**

These mostly Government funded Sports Assemblies offer many opportunities in regional areas of Victoria. Membership is not expensive. They are generally run by talented individuals and a closer relationship with them can produce opportunities for clubs to grow their sport and membership. Example....social media education, workshops in governance and Government and Council regulations.

## **GOVERNMENT AND COUNCIL PROGRAMS & other**

- Active April\*
- Men's Health Week\*
- Seniors Week\*
- This Girl Can\*
- Council School Holiday Programs
- Teachers' Games

These programs are marketing tools for clubs to recruit new members. All have opportunities attached to them in one way or another and by utilising the framework of these programs, clubs can achieve a better outcome from a marketing point of view. Review these programs on-line for more information.

By using google search and typing in the VicHealth program, details of these initiatives will be displayed (generally speaking).

Most club secretaries receive information from VicHealth and/or Croquet Victoria regarding these programs. If your club is not receiving this information, contact the Croquet Victoria Secretary, Sarina Cevaal-Hewitt – email [secretary@croquetvic.asn.au](mailto:secretary@croquetvic.asn.au).

### *Example:*

Active April etc.\* Whilst these initiative have their own objectives (to increase sport and activity in the community), clubs are not bound by the parameters of VicHealth who have initiated these programs. A local group of professionals such as health professionals in a nursing home or hospital, a shire council, large business or a school could be approached to participate in croquet for a month. The club can set its own objectives which would include a cost, time, day etc. that is acceptable to all parties.

To organise this a club could offer a morning tea at the location of the prospective players (at the club's cost), taking along some registration forms and showing the “*Croquet: A Hit for Health*” or “*Croquet: An Ageless Game*” video and speaking about the benefits of the sport.

To promote this activity, a Press Release with an accompanying photo could be lodged with the local newspaper, an event post on Facebook issued to broaden the marketing of the event (if required) etc. and an approach to local community radio (usually an on-line application today) can give free publicity for the club and the event.

### Teachers' Games:

These games are held annually. This year and again in 2020 they will be held in Geelong. By approaching the local schools or a university in your immediate location, clubs can offer to sponsor participants to learn how to play so that they can compete.

Sponsorship can include for example, free coaching, as well as an opportunity for a number of teachers to play on a particular day or time of day that suits them. Naturally green fees apply. CV insurance applies as they are considered to be visiting. No affiliation fee is required, for the same reason. However, it is an opportunity to introduce the sport to people who engage with young people and at the same time improve the club's cash flow and profile.

**The best marketing tool for a club to have is a focus on young people. All organisations no matter who they are or where they are located in Victoria are keen to support a youth program and/or a club that supports young people in the community.**

## **FUNDING**

- Grants

Grants are available from many sources..... Federal, State and Local Governments, Business, Sports Foundations just to name a few. Most of these applications are now completed on-line and Clubs need to ensure that they have people available to access them.

Grants are the lifeblood of many clubs. New equipment, building improvements, ground improvements, uniforms, lighting, new sporting programs, can all be applied for.

However, both Council and Government Departments now require Clubs to comply with new regulations that continue to put clubs on a more professional footing. Clubs need to work closely with these organisations to ensure they understand the issues clubs have to deal with.

The Marketing and Publicity Officer, the President or Secretary of a Club should ensure they know who is the current President of any Service Club in the local district. These Clubs annually return funds to the community by way of a donation for projects or programs

A Newsletter from the Club on a regular basis, a personal invitation to attend the AGM etc., an invitation to members for a social game, are all positive steps to ensure these organisations know what the club is engaged in as well as their needs.

- Sponsors

Sponsors can be approached to sponsor an event, a club or a team of players and there is no doubt that this sponsorship will make a huge contribution. However, this works two ways. The club benefits and so should the organisation that is giving the funds. Approaching a sponsor should be carefully considered. It is important that the sponsor will feel they are going to profit in some way from providing the funds.

If, as an example, a local newspaper does not print sponsors' names in results or a story, the sponsor should be given this information up-front at time of negotiation. Social media is an excellent avenue today to promote a relationship with a local business.

It is important for Clubs to “ASK”. Do not make up a sponsor's mind for them. A “NO” is better than not asking at all.

**The higher the profile of a club in the community, the more opportunity there will be to receive sponsorship funds.**

## **CLUB MandP BUDGETS**

*In these days of cash-strapped clubs, it may seem an odd idea to include some annual funds for the Club's M & P budget. However, the opposite is true. It is in fact self-funding.*

In this competitive world of raising money for clubs, some funds should be allocated to make sure the club's profile is high in the community. Some advertorial copy in the local paper or a Come & Try advertisement, membership of a local business group, or funds to purchase promotional items from Croquet Victoria are a number of examples. By making these funds available annually, the club's officer/s who is allocated the job to market and promote can make better decisions on the use of these funds.

- **Croquet Victoria Assistance Opportunities**

As an example, access to the Junior Scholarship Funds have recently been improved. These funds have ensured junior players and their parent/s can afford the travel costs involved for coaching and competing in tournaments. Details on the Croquet Vic website.

## **CROQUET VIC MARKETING & PROMOTIONAL PRODUCTS**

- **Growing Croquet**
- **Strategic Planning**

Both these forward thinking plans are available from Croquet Victoria and can be located on their web site. Again, both can be used to influence local Councils or State/Federal Government Ministers where applicable and/or necessary.

- **Calendars**

Another marketing tool to use to influence people such as local newspaper editors, Councillors and Council executives. These are not produced just to hang in a club (teaching the converted). These calendars are perfect to highlight the club's local tournaments and fixtures. As an example...editors need content and a reminder on the calendar that there is something on at the croquet club can result in a photographer or journalist arriving for local news content.

- **Pens**
- **Bookmarks**
- **Brochures**
- **Bumper Stickers**

Promotional Products for consideration in the future:

Celebration Cards/Stubbie Holders/Fridge Magnets/Mallet covers/Croquet Equipment bags/Drink Bottles

All items now available have been produced by the M and P sub-committee and are suitable for promotional handouts. They can also be used as prizes for social and special event croquet days.

- Videos – Croquet: “*A Hit For Health*” & “*An Ageless Game*”

The “*Croquet: A hit for health*” video has been professionally produced for the Marketing and Publicity Sub-Committee of Croquet Victoria especially for allied health workers such as physiotherapists.

All croquet clubs with a Facebook page should provide a link to either Croquet Victoria or YouTube where the video is available on demand.

“*Croquet: An Ageless Game*” can be used by clubs to recruit on a general recruiting basis.

## **MEDIA**

- Local newspapers

A good relationship with the sports editor or editor of the local paper can be very advantageous to a club. Weekly or regular contributions either with stories, photos and/or results will raise the profile of the club and the sport. Newspapers always need content and it is free.

- Community Radio

These radio stations can be contacted via the internet. For example in the South West of Victoria, 3HA is the local radio station (a relay station of 3AW) and accepts community news notices/bulletins. These are now on-line applications/contributions. It is a free service.

- School Newsletters

These newsletters can be used to announce a school program or a junior Come & Try day. It is a free service.

- Council Newsletters

Councils like to see news items and photos that reflect the contribution the clubs make in the community. Their regular newsletters (whether on-line or hard copy) need content. They are well worth contacting when clubs have something to tell the local community. It is a free service.

**FREE MEDIA IS WELL WORTH PURSUING**

- **Facebook**

Many clubs now have a Facebook. It has its place in the media landscape. Instagram and Twitter also have a place. Clubs may elect to use all three social media avenues or choose just one.

It should be remembered that it is not often possible to isolate what works best. Marketing and Publicity is not a tangible thing. What is important is that clubs put themselves “out into the community” in a variety of ways. A mix of promotional effort will bring results .....sometimes in the most unlikely of consequences.

IT IS IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER THAT MARKETING AND PUBLICITY IS NOT A TANGIBLE THING. IT IS NOT ALWAYS ONE MARKETING TOOL THAT PRODUCES A RESULT. MORE OFTEN THAN NOT IT IS A NUMBER OF MARKETING AND PROMOTIONAL EFFORTS THAT PRODUCE THE RESULTS A CLUB IS ENDEAVOURING TO ACHIEVE.

### **USEFUL LINKS**

<https://www.croquetvic.asn.au> – the Croquet Victoria website

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ltTNS\\_zp1wo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ltTNS_zp1wo) *Croquet: A hit for health*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M2O4uvEOXrk> - *Croquet: an ageless game*

25<sup>th</sup> October, 2019.