



CUADC Guide to Publicity

Introduction

What is a Publicist?

The job of the Publicist is fundamentally to ensure the show sells as many tickets as possible by whatever means possible (provided they are legal, of course!) There are now so many shows in Cambridge that the commercial success of your show depends upon spreading the word and creating a 'buzz' about it before it even gets to the stage. There are no hard and fast rules about how to do this, so there is scope for lots of creative thinking, but you need to make sure the basics are covered.

The Publicist is responsible for ensuring that printed material such as posters and flyers are designed and printed on time, that these advertising materials are put up all over the town and University, that student and local newspapers are aware of (and interested in) the show, that any means of publicising to the 'outside world' are made use of, and that the cast be encouraged to join in and widen the scope of the campaign. Depending upon the show you may also be asked or choose to organise publicity stunts in town, get T-shirts printed, or arrange ticket offers or even competitions.

The best publicity campaigns have an overriding theme or idea – a recurring image, a particular person, a certain colour – and if you can co-ordinate your publicity material and tone with eventual design ideas for the show to create a strong, united image, so much the better. Come up with a 'concept' and try and stick to it.

Responsibilities

The responsibilities of a Publicist vary widely. Here is a runthrough of the elements that a Publicist may take care of. Each and every one of these should be discussed at your first Publicity meeting to establish to what extent each will be pursued and whose responsibility they will be, and further information on each can be found in this guide.

Preparing Publicity Material

- Designing Posters & Flyers
- Designing any other printed material
- Business cards
- Pamphlets

- Anything specifically relevant to the show
- Preparing a publicity schedule/rota
- Distribution of material

Additional Publicity Methods

- Newspapers
- School and University Groups
- Mailouts
- Stash
- Video trailers
- Facebook event
- Facebook images
- Stunts and showcases
- Ticket offers
- Designing and printing programmes
- Taking and uploading rehearsal photographs
- Any other online campaigns
- Photoshoots

Recruiting and Early Stages

The role of Publicist is a vaguely defined one, so it is best that the Producer and Director decide early on exactly what they would like done, decide how many people will be needed to execute this, and begin recruiting the necessary people. It is not uncommon these days for a single person to be appointed with the sole responsibility of dealing with the logistical side of the publicity campaign, often an Assistant Producer. Someone to take care of design is of course essential. The two can be combined or kept separate. Additional people may be required for a larger show as well.

The ADC Theatre produces a brochure detailing their shows for the coming term, which is often done before a Publicist is on board. Think carefully about this, as imagery that is consistent through this stage all the way to the start of the show is a great asset to the campaign. A strong, instantly recognisable image is invaluable. If you need help with this, either appoint a Publicist/Publicity Designer or consult the Club Publicist.

The Stages of Preparing Publicity Material

Publicity Meeting and Preliminary Considerations

It is a good idea to begin by scheduling a meeting or segment of a meeting specifically discuss publicity with the Director, Producer and any other relevant production team members. What would the team like integrated into the campaign? Is there a particularly strong feature of the show that could be exploited for publicity purposes? The Director is also likely to want input into (or control of) the poster/flyer design, and this should also be discussed early on, as this will be the first major project of the campaign.

How many flyers and posters are wanted and how will they be distributed? This is one of the toughest questions a Publicist must answer in tandem with other production team members. Really, the ideal amount of publicity material is the amount you can distribute at full strength, but you also must consider cost. You should think carefully about how your distribution campaign is going to work when deciding how

many posters and flyers you need. If you intend to pigeonhole individual colleges with flyers as well as giving them out in Market Square, you are going to need a lot of flyers, particularly if you have a two week show. More often than not, shows order too many posters and flyers and end up wasting them. However, it is much cheaper to get all your material printed at once than decide later you want to order more. Here is a rough guide, however variation from this is totally acceptable. Contact the Club Publicist if you'd like to chat it through with someone.

	ADC 2-week Mainshow	ADC 1-week Mainshow	ADC Lateshow / Corpus Mainshow	Corpus Lateshow	One-night stand
Posters	500-800	200-500	100-200	50-200	25-100
Flyers	7,500-15,000	2,500-7,500	1,000-5,000	500-2,500	500-1,000

For flyers, the club usually expects double-sided prints, as they look the best, however single-sided flyers are an option depending on the needs of your show. This is something to discuss at this stage alongside the Club Publicist. Larger shows should also consider a banner at this stage.

What other material might you be interested in? Business cards, pamphlets, and other printed material are all good ways to sell the show and should be decided based on aspects specific to the show.

Concept and Ideas

Have a meeting with your Director/Producer and any ADs/APs to settle on an angle for your poster. You could start with important imagery, colour schemes, fonts, or any important emotions. This is the stage for any hand-drawn artwork or design. Think about whether a photoshoot will take place. If so there is a guide at the end of the document about this. Don't forget that the Club logo must be included in all printed material and space must be allowed for this. Also make sure to check with your Producer if there are any requirements from the company or individual that gave you the rights for performance: for example sometimes rights holders, companies or translators need to be credited, in other cases you will need a 'by kind permission of', and these will need to appear on all publicity.

This is also the time to think about the size of posters and flyers. Typically, posters are A3 and flyers are A6, however there is room for variation here. A2 posters, for example, are very striking, and look superb, but are difficult to place on full noticeboards, and may be rejected by shops and restaurants for being too large. A3 posters are practical and easy to manage but may get lost on crowded boards. A5 flyers can be used as small posters in places with little space, but are bulky to hand out to the public. A6 flyers on the other hand are of a useful size to hand out or put in pigeonholes, but if one-sided carry little more than the bare minimum of information. If you wish, you can of course have square, or even elongated posters and flyers. This just involves calculating the necessary size for an appropriate layout plan. The Director or Producer may have ideas about this as well and should be instructed about the options so a decision can be reached that everyone is happy with.

Also you should think about a press release at this point. The Producer should know when this will be needed. Press releases should be about 300 or 400 words long. They should aim to inform the reader about the show both in terms of plot or subject matter, and perhaps something of its history (does it have any stories attached to it? Been recently filmed? Have famous people been involved with it?) As well as staking your own claim to originality – why is this production special? You could also sing the praises of your cast, crew and Director, even adding quotes from previous shows if appropriate. It is important to grab the reader instantly, so an eye-catching headline such as a quote from a review or the script itself can be an excellent way to begin, or indeed to end. Keep the tone of your press release in line with that of your show.

It has been known for large sections (even the entire length) of releases to appear in the press verbatim so do not underestimate their importance.

Digital Design

Once you have your photos or any other material necessary, you should get straight on with doing the poster design. It can take a while, but as with most elements of a student show, doing this as quickly as possible often helps. If you are preparing for a show that is taking place in the following term, doing this over the holidays can often be a great way to save time, as once it is out of the way you will have time to concentrate on the other aspects of the campaign. You should use Photoshop (available on the club room computers) or another similar programme to produce a digital version of the image that can be sent to the Director or Producer for their consideration. Many drafts may need to go back and forth between designer and production team, and often having a sit-down session with everyone involved can be a quick and easy way to do this. Sending things around by e-mail often works as well.

There are several necessary elements of all publicity material. There are many formatting guidelines for these, which the Production Manager at the Theatre or the Club Publicist can assist with. The publicity material for all CUADC shows must include all of the following:

- The CUADC logo, available on our website
- A venue logo (which usually includes the theatre's address, if not the address must also be included)
- The date and time of all performances
- Ticket prices
- A website and phone number for booking

Currently, ADC management produce a banner which includes all but the first of these elements (the CUADC logo you must include yourself). Someone on your production team will usually be sent this banner by the Marketing Manager, whom you could alternatively get in touch with directly to grab the file.

While this design process is happening, it is important to include the Club Publicist up to date with all of your ideas and that the club logo is included on all material. Once you believe that you have a version that everyone on the team is happy with, you should first proofread it yourself absolutely thoroughly. While the Club Publicist will check it themselves as best they can, it is your responsibility that there be no mistakes. A second pair of eyes often helps here. Once you have a version you are absolutely happy with, you must send it to the Club Publicist who will check everything is in order. Once you have their approval, you are ready to go to print!

Printing

The most popular way to print material nowadays is through an online printing company. Search online for companies like JamJar, StuPrint and Print24 which are all popular options. Some companies such as JamJar have accounts with CUADC. They each have various strengths and weaknesses – some offer very competitive rates but sloppy processing, for example. Make sure to shop around extensively, and don't be afraid to call and enquire about your needs. The final decision about who to use must be made alongside the Producer and any Assistant Producers that are on board. This is a difficult phase of the process and you can always consult the Club Publicist if you're unsure. Once a decision has been made, it is the Producer's responsibility to decide and arrange how this is to be paid for. No-one should be out of pocket unless they are willing and able to be (temporarily of course).

Scheduling

As soon as material is sent to print and thus the amount of posters, flyers and any other material is confirmed, a rota should be made straight away so that it can be put into action as soon as things arrive.

Distribution

It is typical to get every member of the production team and cast (perhaps also the band if applicable) to help out with distribution. This should take place as soon as material arrives, but be aware to spread out your material over the period between that time and the last performance of the show. Unless it is sold out, you can continue distribution during the run of the show for future performances as well. Exit flyering is a popular way to distribute flyers, and should be part of the rota. One or two team members stand outside the exit to the ADC Theatre, Corpus Playroom or other venue at the conclusion of a show (take some time to think about shows with elements in common to focus on) to hand out flyers.

Below is a list of popular distribution sites for publicity material in Cambridge.

Colleges

- **ARU** At least poster the East Road site, by the Mumford Theatre
- **Caius** JCR, MCR and the buttery area in the back court. K staircase.
- **Christ's** Go through the first court and up the buttery stairs in the near right-hand corner of the second court. Up the stairs there are several poster boards.
- **Churchill** Go along the main corridor from the entrance, there is a set of boards towards the end on your right.
- **Clare** Clare Cellars. Go down staircase A in the near right-hand corner of the main court and poster in the bar corridor area. H staircase is also a possibility.
- **Corpus Christi** JCR and pigeonhole area in the left hand corner of the first court.
- **Darwin** Speak to the Porters
- **Downing** Posters must be given to the Porters.
- **Emmanuel** Turn left as you enter the first court and poster the pigeonhole area along on the left.
- **Fitzwilliam** JCR/Buttery area. Go through the P'Lodge and take the main door in the centre of the buildings on the right. There are several boards in the area.
- **Girton** Pigeonhole area; along the corridor to the left as you enter through the main door. Also try near the bar and dining hall.
- **Homerton** By the vending machines. Go in via the P'Lodge and turn left along the corridor.
- **Jesus** Go through the archway and turn right. Use the board in the first passageway you come to. Also the post room, round to the left of the P'Lodge.
- **King's** Pigeonhole area, in through the main gate and turn right up the steps
- **Magdalene** There is a JCR pigeonhole for posters in the P'Lodge.
- **Murray Edwards** Go through the entrance, along the corridor, turn left and poster the JCR on the right. There are also various boards along the main corridor.
- **Newnham** Give posters to the Porters for date stamping.
- **Pembroke** There is a JCR pigeonhole for posters in the post room. Turn right through the main entrance and the post room is on the right.
- **Peterhouse** Give posters to the Porters for stamping or poster the JCR and bar in the right hand corner of the main court.
- **Queens'** Bar area at the back of Cripps Court
- **Robinson** JCR at the end of the corridor going off the right-hand side of the courtyard.
- **St Catharine's** Leave posters in the JCR pigeonhole.
- **St John's** Go through the great gate, through to the second court and the bar is in the lefthand corner.

- **Selwyn** Posters need to be stamped by the Porters. Turn right after the main archway and you can poster the pigeon hole area in the right-hand corner.
- **Sidney Sussex** Poster the pigeonhole area – turn into the court and the right and straight ahead.
- **Trinity** Outside the JCR (stairway opposite Hall); the back entrance to Whewell’s Court and the entrance to the Wolfson Building.
- **Trinity Hall** Get posters stamped by the Porters. Go into the first court and turn right through staircase B, then left to A. Up the stairs and round to the right there is a poster board.
- **Wolfson** There is one board close to the P’lodge; also go in the back door and find the one in the back corridor.

Departments

- **Sidgwick Site History Faculty** The coffee lounge (first floor) and the noticeboard outside the library.
- **Sidgwick Site Economics** Get posters stamped in Rm. 7 of the Faculty Building, and then put them up on the stairs by the library. (They will be removed after seven days)
- **Sidgwick Site Law Building** The coffee area in the basement and a couple of other poster boards around the central area.
- **Sidgwick Site English Library** There are two boards on the landing (up the stairs) by the entrance
- **UL** The wall of the locker room; also hand one in to the map room and they put them up outside the tea room.
- **Buttery Poster** the noticeboard on the wall at the back.
- **Geography Department** Enter building and go down the stairs to find the first board; turn left and the 2nd is along the corridor.
- **New Museums Old Arts School** There are several notice boards in the corridors on the ground floor.
- **New Museums Babbage Lecture Theatre** There are boards outside of here and of the 1A Physics Lecture Theatre opposite.
- **New Museums Zoology** By the entrance to the Zoology museum, and the main entrance. Check at reception before postering.
- **Downing Site Geology** Give poster to the administrator to be put up in reception area. The office is directly opposite the main door underneath the stairs up to the museum as you come into the department. There are also boards outside the Tiley Lecture Theatre and inside Harker 1 LT.
- **Downing Site Archaeology** The Haddon Library has space for posters. Ask the Librarians before putting anything up.
- **Chemistry Department** Lensfield Rd
- **Lecture Halls** Mill Lane

Places in Town

- La Margherita Bridge St
- The Baron of Beef Bridge St
- The Maypole Portugal Pl
- Sainsbury’s Sidney St
- Gardies Rose Crescent
- Waterstones Sidney St
- Tatties Trinity St
- Clown’s King St
- Brian Jordan Green St
- Heffers Bookshop Trinity St (take flyers and a poster for the staffroom)
- Heffers Classical Music Trinity St (take flyers)
- Cambridge University Press King’s Parade (flyers)
- Indigo coffee shop King’s Parade
- The Eagle Bene’t St
- The Bath House Bene’t St

- The Fitzwilliam Museum Trumpington St (flyers)
- The University Arms Hotel Regent St (flyers)
- The Crowne Plaza Hotel Downing St (flyers)
- The information desk in the Grafton Centre
- Kelsey Kerridge
- Second hand bookshops Mill Road
- The Arts Theatre (may or may not accept flyers these days, always worth a try).

There are many more – just ask as many as possible!

Additional Publicity Methods

Newspapers

Do your best to ensure that reviewers are coming to the show. Try and ask for someone to come and preview it as well – The Tab, Varsity and TCS may all be interested. You should also ensure that your show is entered into the week's listings for The Tab or Varsity.

School and University Groups

If your show has academic potential, do not underestimate the number of tickets it is possible to sell to local schools, particularly if your play is actually on the list of prescribed texts for A-level or GCSE. Don't think just in terms of English, since there may be relevance to Philosophy and Language courses as well. Telephone schools and speak to teachers/heads of department directly to find out if they are interested, and then send out more information.

Talk to your Director about how they feel about inviting school parties before you do so. There can be problems with large groups, particularly of GCSE students, and Directors may not feel that philanthropic if they think it could disrupt the show. With particularly sensitive material experience has shown that school groups can be a real problem; it may be advisable to talk to the teacher in charge in advance, or simply not go out of your way to invite schools. That said, some Directors may be very keen to have school parties in, and even to arrange a talk or questions session after the show. If there is enthusiasm for schools, you could offer to produce detailed production notes for the group. You should also talk to Management about what can now be offered to schools by the ADC. Bear in mind that for shows that are not selling out, getting more people through the door with complimentary tickets, for example for school groups, looks better than a swathe of empty seats and may affect the sales of future performances.

The Theatre also carries a list of names and addresses of local schools should you wish to send them information. Don't forget the language, philosophy and English students at the two universities however. Try finding lecturers and supervisors to promote the show for you. Ask members of the cast and crew who do relevant subjects to pass on details to those in their study groups. Access varies from year to year, but it is usually possible to get announcements sent out on departmental and faculty lists if you email their administrators.

Mailouts

The Theatre has a mailing list of theatre-goers categorised by preferred type of performance (eg. musicals, classic drama), which can be used to target a particular audience directly. A document similar to the press release is sent out, and although this procedure can involve lots of envelope stuffing it can be worth the effort. Mailouts can also be shared between shows, which saves on postage costs. Approach Management

if you would like to do a mailout, or if another show is doing one you may be asked whether you wish to contribute.

Stash

Most shows now organise the printing of stash, often T-shirts, to foster a sense of camaraderie, but these are an excellent means of publicising the show if you get them done early enough. An eye-catching image (or simply the name of the show) can be supplemented with the show's performance details on the back.

Video trailers

It is now common for large shows to produce a video trailer promoting their show. This can often be done with a DSLR camera, and it is advisable to consult whoever is taking care of photography for the show about this if you are unsure. Short is probably best with these, even a 30-second trailer can communicate volumes about the tone of a show.

Facebook Event

It is imperative that every show have its own Facebook event and that all cast and production team members are asked to invited as many friends as possible. Consider uploading rehearsal photographs, video trailers and electronic posters and flyers to these as well.

Facebook Images

A popular recent trend has been producing cover photos for all cast and crew members. These are a great way to get the show noticed. Profile pictures are another option, and should be dealt with by whoever is handling digital design.

Stunt and Showcases

Anything that might work with the theme of your show is worth considering; otherwise the basic rule is just to use your imagination. The easiest and least-time consuming (and perhaps still the best) thing to do is just to organise the cast into flyering in costume (or if not possible, in show T-shirts, see above) preferably with a large prop or piece of set to add interest. Going slightly further in past years have been the escapology stunt, the guillotine in Market Square and the attempt to raise the Jolly Roger to the top of Sidney Sussex. A great idea to boost interest in your show before it begins is to get the cast out in costume into Market Square, with flyers, and invite the press to take photos. If Varsity and TCS aren't interested, Cambridge Evening News might well be. This of course works much better if you actually have a stunt.

Performing scenes on the street may also work well. Again it is likely to attract photos, and if you have a suitable show you can draw in members of the public. By way of example, for *The Crucible* you could try someone as a witch; for the pantomime threaten to douse small children in water, and so on. If you are doing anything like this however you should inform the authorities in advance to ensure it is ok!

Previews in other locations can work well too. Invite the press to full show rehearsals for TCS and Varsity previews. You could also suggest holding a costumed dress rehearsal at a school or old people's home to which the press could come – again, strong publicity especially if photos are printed.

Ticket offers

On the first night of any ClubShow Club members are entitled to a '3 for 2' ticket offer. You can however (subsequent to negotiation with Management and the Junior Treasurer) organise ticket offers yourself.

Bear in mind that if the show sells out comps and ticket offers need to be paid for by the Club so this is not something you want to do too much! That said, something like offering a group discount for school parties might be a good idea.

Designing and Printing Programmes

This may fall to the Producer or Assistant Producer, however most shows will want a programme of some kind. These can either be free or cost anything from 50p upwards. These can be a direct way of making money, although this should not be counted on for any significant financial gain. There are a few options when it comes to programmes. The first is a single sheet, which could be either folded or unfolded. Whether or not you are charging for these, people are unlikely to pay more than 50p and they should be nicely printed, although as a student theatre this need not be done professionally, and is often done in the ADC clubroom. Larger shows often opt for nicely-designed, multi-page glossy programmes, which are often sold at £2. These should be professionally printed and ordered at least a week before the show.

Rehearsal Photographs

This is a good way to publicise the show online during the rehearsal process. A DSLR camera should be used for this, although any photos can generate interest. Some thought should be given to unifying this process with Facebook events, images and trailers. Consult the guide to photoshoots below for more information.

Photoshoots

A photoshoot is a good idea to produce photographs for publicity material, as well as throughout the rehearsal process for additional interest. You will need to arrange a venue, a photographer, your cast members, the poster designer (if appropriate) and possibly the Director, who may wish to ensure certain photos are taken. The choice of venue is up to you and your team, but if you wish to book the stage at the ADC then this can be done through Theatre Management. This does have the advantage of the lighting rig which can be used to great effect, but you will need to make sure you have a competent person to manipulate it for you. Many colleges make excellent settings (if you can manage to get into them) especially for period photographs, so think carefully about your choice of venue.

- **Photographers and cameras**

The Club Publicist has a slowly growing list of photographers, and can be asked for help with finding someone. Otherwise approach friends and those in college. Film and developing costs can be reimbursed by the Club on presentation of a claims form. It is up to you whether you use a digital camera or otherwise, but bear in mind that properly printed photographs always look better when enlarged than digital printouts, although digital photos are handy for being electronically transferable. For preference use an ordinary camera (and a scanner!) but if possible it may be beneficial to take a selection of digital and ordinary photos.

- **Cast**

You will need to have agreed in advance what the cast will be wearing for the shoot. Proper costumes will obviously need to be organised by the costume designer or the Producer, but depending upon the show some form of neutral clothing may be all that is necessary. As Publicist it is really only necessary for you to ensure that this is something the Director has thought about.

- **Direction**

The aim at a photoshoot is both quantity and quality. Finding out about the intended design(s) for poster and flyers in advance means specific shots can be taken, saving time and money. Encourage your Director and/or poster designer to decide what particular shots they may be looking for before you start.

- **When to have your photoshoot**

The ADC and Theatre brochures have already been mentioned. If your show is early in the term and your Director auditions and chooses a cast prior to the end of the previous term, it is a good idea to organise the photoshoot then. Good photos can then be given to the Theatre and/or the Club for central publicity purposes, and you then also have the scope to design your poster during the break, ready for printing at the start of the following term.

- **Common pitfalls**

- Don't chop off people's hands and feet in the photos. Photos can be cropped artistically for posters/flyers but it is difficult to replace missing appendages.
- Do take a variety of different photographs as well as your intended ones. The poster design may change, or you may find particular uses for particular photographs. Mix close-ups, group shots, individual poses and 'action' shots.
- Be aware that time may be an issue and that black and white film takes longer to process and can be more expensive. (It is however possible to use C41 film, which although black and white, can be done on a colour process if time is of the essence).
- If you want a poster built around a single photo, consider the space around your image carefully – you will need space to put details.
- Think about the colours of your poster; both in terms of suitable areas in the photograph/poster to insert text (ie. quite dark or quite light in tone) and what will stand out on an already fussy-looking college noticeboard. Photos with strongly contrasted areas are also easier to manipulate, especially if you want your images to be 'cut out'.
- Consider using a tripod, the photos will be sharper that way.

Finally, Have Fun!

Enjoy the job and be as creative as you can. It looks like a lot of work, but delegation and organisation make it considerably simpler. If you need any help, you can always contact the Club Publicist at publicist@cuadc.org for assistance.