



POINT-TO-POINT AUTHORITY

MARKETING & PR RECOMMENDATIONS

ROCHESTER
PR & MARKETING

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OVERVIEW

This document offers marketing and PR recommendations for point-to-point fixtures. These recommendations are a reference and self-help guide to develop and implement marketing & PR practices for a point-to-point fixture.

These recommendations are general and need to be tailored to the specific fixture's requirement, resource and budget, focusing on the elements that are important to the event and will deliver results to help raise awareness and attendance.

We are aware that the challenge for a the point-to-point committee is often working with limited resources. Therefore, we have made suggestions around low cost activities and ideas. These recommendations are also not set in stone.

Part one of this guide highlights the importance of and focuses on creating a marketing and Public Relations (PR) plan. Similarly with a business, evaluating the resources and how you can apply them best, is important to help mould a marketing plan.

Part two focuses on applying modern and traditional marketing & PR tools - how they can be applied, along with some tips and examples of the good, the bad and the ugly of marketing and PR.

Traditional marketing and PR tools can play an important role within a plan and are tried and tested means of delivering a successful marketing and PR plan. We look at advertising and creating that attention grabbing piece of artwork as well as producing effective PR, with suggestions on generating a strong news story in the media.

We also consider the online market: how a website provides an important shop window and can be complemented by online advertising, email campaigns and highlighting the reach and opportunity of social and digital media. The Do's and Don'ts of social media's aims to provide a guide on establishing a good social media practice.

Finally, have some fun with the marketing and PR of the point-to-point and best of luck!

On behalf of the Point-to-Point Authority we would like to thank the Horserace Betting Levy Board who have generously supported this initiative.

PART 1 - THE MARKETING & PR PLAN

OBJECTIVES

When devising the marketing and PR plan, it is important to consider and establish the goals and objectives. Suggested objectives may be:

- Increase on the gate visitors
- Increase visits from region e.g. people living in a 30 mile radius of the racecourse
- Raise awareness of an 'added extra', activity taking place for the first time
- Drive advanced online bookings

Developing a marketing strategy, will help you identify the right marketing and PR tools to use in order to help effectively implement it.

MARKETING AND PR AUDIT

A good place to start when considering the marketing and PR plan is to look at the fixture's previous activity and consider what has worked well in the past. If specific activities have proved successful then dovetailing them into the new marketing and PR plan is likely to deliver further success. Also, consider how previous activity that may have not delivered could be improved on. Consider best practices and evaluate the marketing activity of the competition.



SWOT

Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats. Considering the point-to-point's strengths and opportunities as well as addressing its weaknesses and threats is an effective exercise to help shape the marketing and PR plan.

EXAMPLE SWOT FOR A POINT-TO-POINT



THE 4 Ps of MARKETING

- The 4 Ps or the marketing mix refers to the set of actions, or tactics, that the event uses to promote itself in the market.
- The 4Ps are the questions that you need to ask to define your marketing mix. These are **P**roduct, **P**rice, **P**lace and **P**romotion.

Clearly defining the product, price, place and time should be considered when developing a marketing plan for any product or brand.

Here are some questions, applied to point-to-points, to help clarify and define each of the four elements, demonstrated in the next diagram.



TARGET MARKET

Identifying the Target Market – who you wish to attract to the event - will help determine where and how marketing activity will be implemented. A target market is a group of customers, a business has decided to aim its marketing efforts towards. A well-defined target market is a key element of the marketing & PR plan.

Recent research from the Horseracing National Racegoers Survey 2015 suggested markets for point-to-points are:

- Those interested in horseracing – go racing 'under rules' 1-5 times a year.
- British Horseracing has a footprint of 12.9 million adults with 5.1m going racing each year, this is a significant audience for point-to-points

Existing groups that go pointing

- Families and social groups
- Regionally – people living within 30 mile radius of the racecourse
- Existing keen attendees of other sporting events
- Regular point-to-point followers
- Supporters of the event / hunt



COMPETITION & THE UNIQUE SELLING POINT (USP)

Point-to-pointing is competing with the leisure pound. Society is spending more on days out and live experiences than ever before. i.e. going to restaurants, the pub, cinema, museums, theatre, live music and sporting events.

The Unique Selling Point, or USP, is what will set the event apart from the competition. By highlighting the USP within marketing and PR messaging will help showcase why visitors should attend.

USP SUGGESTIONS

Sport

- Showcase quality and competitive sport achieved via all marketing and PR communications

Price

- Admission price – is it competitive / offers good value

Value

In addition to the horseracing, add value to the visitor's day with extra activities;

- Demonstrations, hound parade, parade of local equine hero's, pony racing
- Spectacles i.e. Food Festival, local craft fair/stalls
- Raceday theatre – via the PA announcer pre and post-race interviews with trainers and jockeys to create pre-race build up and anticipation
- Incentivise 'fluttering' by marking the card ahead of racing or briefly before each race in the paddock
- Celebrate the winners – announce them into the winners enclosure

Seasonal

- If the point-to-point falls within a festive period organise festive theming and activities e.g. Christmas, Valentine's, Easter and Mothering / Fathering Sunday

Having identified the target market, competition and the unique selling point (USP) and considered the SWOT analysis and 4 P's of the point-to-point, you are in a position to produce a tailored marketing and PR plan to promote the fixture.

The next part of this document focuses on applying modern and traditional marketing & PR tools, along with some tips and examples of the good, the bad and the ugly of marketing and PR.

PHASE 2 MARKETING & PR TOOLS

WEBSITE

A unique website or page within the hunt website dedicated to the point-to-point is recommended. With more and more of society being 'online' a website acts as the fixture's shop window and is where many look to find out more about a product, in this case the point-to-point fixture.

Website or web page tips

- The website should be easy to navigate and full of information about the fixture. Include the website URL in all marketing materials to help drive traffic to it.
- Responsive - make sure the site works on any device – smart phones/ipad etc.
- Appropriate to the topic – the content and imagery should relate to the point-to-point and the fixture you are promoting.
- Provide great content that's easy to find, navigate, consume, and share.
- If developing a new website we recommend using a HTML build as opposed to a flash build to help with SEO.
- Ensure the website is clutter free.



SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMISATION (SEO)

SEO is a methodology used to increase visitors to a website by obtaining a high-ranking placement in the search results page of a search engine including Google and Yahoo!

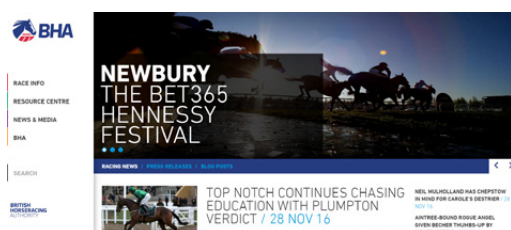
Good SEO practice is often extensive and scientific. If you're focussing on improving the SEO ranking of your website, in order to achieve tangible results we advise to consult with a SEO specialist. However, below are some suggestions which can help with organically improving your website SEO.

1. Content - It's important to include keywords relating to your product or brand. However, your content should most importantly be informative and meaningful. Remember you are creating content for humans, not search engines.
2. Search engines love fresh and relevant content. Often, website content remains the same, which is why it's important for websites to include a blog. Your blog should be filled with new regular information. By blogging you will build relationships with your visitors, position yourself as a thought leader, and provide new content for search engines to index.
3. Internal links - Create links on the page related to other pages. This is your opportunity to direct visitors to other relevant content you have to offer and keep them moving through your website.

GOOD AND BAD website examples!

No - **www.jamilin.com** Cluttered, no clear message, difficult to access content a confusing web experience!

Yes - **www.britishhorseracing.com** - clean, instantly recognisable as a horseracing website, content is easy to access, clean/uncluttered look and feel



E-SHOT

An E-shot, is an effective and no cost method of raising awareness of the fixture and can also help to drive traffic to the website. However, as more and more emails flood inboxes, how do we know they're even getting viewed?

Bottom line: If you're giving people what they want, they'll open your emails.

- Consider your target audience. What content will provide them with the most value?
- Use a clear subject line that tells the reader exactly what is inside the email. Then include content that describes what benefit you are providing and creates an enticing call to action, which then links to your website where content lives.
- The best times to send a marketing email are Tuesday and Wednesday mid-morning or mid-afternoon.

We suggest not to email from a personal email account but to use a recognised email software program to facilitate this. They are generally free to use up to a fixed number of emails. We suggest **MailChimp** and **Dotmailer**.

N.B under data protection law the recipient must have agreed to be contacted by you. For more information on the Data Protection Act, click [here](#)



ADVERTISING

Advertising can raise awareness of your event but there is usually a cost attached with securing space.

Referring to your target market, SWOT analysis and 4P's will help identify who your target audience is and influence where it will be effective to advertise.

Media to consider for advertising

- Print, radio, broadcast, billboards, internet, flyers, posters
- Newspapers and magazines, generally a publication with a circulation local to the event location
- Equestrian or horseracing publications – ones with a local focus as well as national
- Radio – local commercial radio stations
- Online advertising – is available in a number of formats, from banner ads, to social media pages
- Pay-per-click advertising: Google AdWords and other paid advertising can be great for jump-starting your fixture and for specifically targeting markets. Cost is usually associated with these types of campaigns

For more information on Google Adwords click [here](#)

- Facebook Advertising

Selecting the right media to advertise with

When enquiring about advertising, the following questions will be helpful in identifying if the media is right to reach the target audience and build an advertising schedule. This information is also generally found on the media's website.

- Circulation – how many copies are circulated per edition (print)
- Readership or listeners – how many people read each edition or listen to the radio station
- Website visitors and demographic (for online advertising)
- Demographic of the readership or listeners of the station
- Geographic reach
- Are there any special supplements, features or pages where your event would be best placed in the publication
- The size and location of adverts versus cost (Print)
- Times when advert will run versus cost (Radio)
- Amount – how many print runs or advert runs (radio) will the advert get – can you negotiate a better deal if you buy in bulk
- Negotiate on cost and/or request if some free advertorial content on the event can be included in other pages of the publication

Also consider dovetailing PR activity with the advertising campaign, targeting similar / the same media.



DESIGN & PRINT

The first step to a successful advertising campaign is to produce an advert that can feature across different media:

- Print – newspapers, magazines, flyers and posters
- Social Media
- Digital advertising
- E-Shot

Tips for artwork design

Simple Layout

Busy, cluttered advertisements are a turn off to readers as the eye finds it difficult to find purchase. Simple layouts reflect easy to understand and concise messages and catch the reader's eye, which is the first goal of any advertisement.

Use Clear Copy

Again, large blocks of copy can be a disincentive to read. Using smaller blocks of copy with bullet points and indentations encourage the reader to start reading and make the information more digestible.

Logical Ad Flow

The eye naturally starts at a page from top left and moves towards the bottom right. The most effective advertisements help this journey by laying out text along the eye's natural 'route' across the page.

Highlight the Benefits

Continually focus on the benefits that your customer will get from your product/service. It's very easy to stray away from the benefits but this is the only reason your customer should bother to read your advert – keep the message simple without technical jargon.



THE GOOD & THE BAD!

We Love – This Girl Can campaign. Their advertising, is clean, snappy, powerful and incentivising. The advert underneath however, is too busy and does not encourage the viewer to call to action.

“Bad advertising is about your company, while good advertising is about your customers!”

ROY H. WILLIAMS



Flyers and Posters

Circulating flyers and posters about the event via the point-to-point committee can be a low cost and effective method to raise awareness of the fixture.

Target outlets for flyers and posters:

- Local pubs, shops particularly local cafés and restaurants , community centres, notice boards.

Banners

Banners advertising the point-to-point or several fixtures in a region can be an effective low cost means of advertising the forthcoming fixture. Especially if placed on local farmer's land or areas with a high footfall near to the event.

PRINT

A budget should be considered to produce the artwork for printed flyers and posters.

Consider the advertising space you have available as this will influence the size requirement of your poster or flyer's.

Suggested print collateral sizes

For posters – ideally A3 (297x240mm) in size. A4 (210x297mm) as the smallest option

For flyers – either A5 or a DL (99x210mm)

A printer can usually create the artwork as well as provide a print service. When considering, gather several print quotes and ask if they include a design service. Or alternatively approach a local design company/consultant to create your artwork.

RACECOURSES

- Racegoers are identified as a potential market
- Create a mutual beneficial advertising opportunity with your local racecourse
- Racecourses are likely to require you to demonstrate the value, the reach of your event and how it will benefit them. Therefore, have visitor figures and benefits at the ready when making contact.
- Contact – the Marketing Department
- Reciprocal suggestions
 - Advert in the race program
 - Flyers at each other's fixture
 - Branding opportunities around the course
 - Logo and link on website
 - Share the social media love



SPONSORSHIP AND PARTNERSHIPS

Most event sponsors and partnerships will want to activate their sponsorship of the fixture or race. This will also provide opportunities for the point-to-point to speak to a new audience.

Therefore, include the sponsor/partner within marketing and PR activity and communicate with them on how they may be able to provide support.

- Establish the sponsor/s communications channels and marketing & PR resource they might share
- Provide sponsors with flyers / posters about the fixture to distribute across their communication channels
- Provide digital version of artwork that can be used within E-Shot to their own databases
- Social media – dovetail the social media strategy to include and mention sponsors and request they reciprocate activity
- New Sponsorships – announce a new sponsorship via press release with imagery

COLLABORATION, ADDING VALUE and CELEBRITY ENDORSEMENT

A charity partnership or collaborating with an organisation that has similar values to the point-to-point but has a different offering can be an effective method of reaching a new and wider audience.

i.e. creating a Charity Partnership and offering their supporters an early bird discount on tickets in exchange for the charity being able to fund raise at the event.

Or the charity may have a celebrity patron – in exchange for a mutually beneficial agreement they could agree access to their patron to help with pre and on the day event publicity.

Collaborating with a local organisation e.g. a club/community group who can exhibit their skills at the event or provide a demonstration. This offers added value to the visitors but also provides an additional hook for people to come to the fixture.

PUBLIC RELATIONS (PR)

While advertising is paid for, public relations (or PR) is unpaid for messaging to the widest possible audience. Good PR before and after an event is invaluable. PR can operate on:

- Traditional: Print, Radio and Broadcast (TV)
- Modern: Social and Digital

Engaging with the media - Print, Radio and Broadcast

Having identified your target market and geographical reach, consider the media that they may watch, listen or read. This will help identify the press goals to achieve media coverage in.

We have suggested some media targets for point-to-points below. Specific websites will have contact details for their news and sports desks.

• Regional

- Print - local newspapers and monthly magazines,
- Radio – BBC regional stations and local commercial stations
- TV – regional BBC and ITV channels

• Horseracing

- Print – Racing Post and national newspapers that feature regular horseracing columns: The Times, Telegraph, Guardian, Daily Mail
- TV - satellite Racing channels (Racing UK and At the Races). Terrestrial Channel 4 and ITV from 2017

• Equestrian

- Horse & Hound (weekly publication, deadline for print is on a Monday morning)
- Local equestrian publications

• Point-to-Point specific

- Jumping4fun.co.uk
- pointtopoint.co.uk

Engaging with the media

Traditional press report on and share news stories. It is important to consider why your story/event is newsworthy before pitching it to them.

Therefore it is also important to provide the media with a news hook. A news hook does not directly try to sell something, but helps to put news in front of the consumer and encourage them to learn more about you.

Creating a news hook

- **Provide a twist on the news agenda** - If a particular trend or topic is hot in the media provide them with a twist to the story, e.g. by sharing a human or equine interest story relating to the fixture.
- **Local and regional media** - Pick up the local newspaper and flick to the sports pages and you'll see countless examples of athletes and teams that got their 15 minutes of fame by being the local example. These types of stories are the bread-and-butter of the hometown press, which the point-to-point falls into, including the jockeys, trainers and horses.
- **Commentary** - Journalism these days often hinges on getting both sides of the story. If you're seeing a one-sided media conversation that's relevant to the fixture, it's an opportunity to provide commentary on a topic and break through as the expert.
- **Seasonal** - It's inevitable. Every Valentine's day or similar, you're going to read countless stories on gifts for him/her. Therefore, provide the media with a new spin on that seasonal feature and you're likely to gain coverage.

PRESS RELEASES – the Do's & the Don'ts

(also see press release template in appendices)



THE DO'S

- Attention grabbing!
- Get to the point
- Provide news hook
- Provide facts and stats
- Use good grammar
- Provide strong photography
- Stick to 1 page / 2 is max
- Include quotes
- Include contacts
- Provide access to more info



THE DON'TS

- Don't ramble
- Go on a sales pitch
- Use photography that's corporate or dull i.e. the corporate suite/ hand shake shot
- Miss out on the actual news

SUGGESTED PR TIMELINE

TIMELINE	PR ACTIVITY	MEDIA TARGET	CONTACT
3 MONTHS ADVANCE	Press release the event description including essential details	Regional newspapers and regional and equestrian magazines	News Desk/Diary Features
ENTRIES STAGE	Entries preview press release. Human and equine interest stories	Regional Newspapers, Horseracing	Sports Desk for regionals newspapers and racing
POST EVENT	Review of day's racing	Regional newspapers and regional and equestrian magazines	Sports Desk for regionals newspapers and racing

PHOTOGRAPHY

Using good photography will help enhance a press release. A high impact photograph that showcases the point-to-point as an exciting and popular event to attend can speak many words and gain you further space in print media.

Organising for a photographer to take shots at the actual event and of winners is also beneficial to use with post event publicity as well as within artwork for the following year's events.

Suggested photography brief;

- Racing action
- Spectators/crowds enjoying the racing action
- Winners
- Visitors enjoying off the track activities (Please note permission to use photos of children must be gained from parents or guardian before use in marketing materials)

SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media provides a great opportunity to communicate to audiences about the fixture.

If there are existing hunt social media accounts, we suggest posting content via these. However, if there is the resource to manage a social media account we recommend setting up a social media account for the fixture.

This process begins by prioritising the social media goals and how this will complement the overall marketing and PR plan. For example, your focus may be to double the number of new visitors to your website.

It is also important to determine the key performance indicators of your social media strategy. i.e. It's likely to be based on engagement stats. These can be broken down into:

- likes and shares your posts receive
- replies and comments
- (most importantly) clicks of your links and content



THE DO's

Know your customers: Your social media pages should be tailored to your consumer base, not based on your own personal interests. Consumers care about what you can do for them. Post stories that they can relate to. Follow the 80/20 rule. 80% of your content (or more) should be relevant to them, while 20% or less can be specifically about your business, products or services.

Be active: on your social media, but don't post so often that you overwhelm people. Too much information can cause your followers to stop following your posts or posts can get lost within their newsfeeds.

Gathering your social media analytics data can help you develop your marketing and social media activity.

Time does matter: Pay attention to analytics. Find out when your followers are most active on social media and post your information during those time frames.

One voice: Social media is great for sharing, but make sure your message is the same across all channels: website, public, social media, etc.

Share: We've been taught to share since we were young kids and some things never change. This is one of those things. Share information!

Checklists: Social media works well with checklists. Make a checklist to ensure that your message will be understood, check for any grammar issues, make sure the information your sharing can be shared, check the time you send it to ensure your readers will see it. Make sure all your links are valid.

Be original: Be creative with your posts. Show your personality. Help people see what makes you different from the competition.

Customer Service: Great customer service can make or break a company. Happy customers are more likely to come back and establish a loyalty to your brand. Not only will these customers be loyal to you, they will also be your best brand ambassadors by word-of-mouth advertising, which is the best advocacy you can ask for!

Understand which social media platform(s) are best for your business. Social media isn't a one size fits all. If you want to improve your SEO, then Google+ or YouTube might be your best choice. If you want to drive traffic to your site, or improve your customer engagement then Facebook, Instagram or Twitter might be a better fit.



THE DON'TS

Liking your own posts: Don't "like" or "favourite" your own material. Encourage the point-to-point's network to share and like the material that is posted. They can be the Point-to-Point's greatest ambassadors.

Neglect: Just because you have a Facebook page or Twitter account doesn't mean you're doing enough. You have to use the accounts to make them work.

Forget to network: Always work to make connections and grow your reach by networking and building quality relationships on social media. If your impression is good enough you might be able to work in a few word-of-mouth shout-outs.

Forget about privacy settings: You use them on your personal profiles, do the same with your business. Remember once you share something on the internet, it doesn't go away.

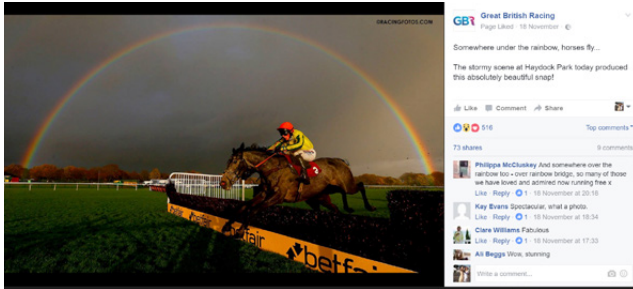
Be spammy: Nobody likes spam, whether it be email or social networking.

Delete negative comments: Acknowledging the problem can not only make an upset customer happy, but it can also prevent the company from a PR issue later. Acknowledging negative comments shows that you're proactive in resolving issues and that you aim to serve your customers.

Avoid responding at all: It is vital to engage with your customers, with no engagement they may feel as if you don't care about their question, comment or concern. It all comes back to customer service. Don't ignore relevant comments. Use them as an opportunity to interact with your followers and show them how you address positive and negative situations.

Have too much automation: You lose the personal touch with customers if it sounds like a computer is speaking to them. "Humanize" your brand to make the engagement experience for the customer more personable.

THE GOOD AND THE BAD



The long-winded

The Cheeseball

The Stock Person

Mr or Mrs Inappropriate



THANK YOU

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PRESS RELEASE TEMPLATE

Objective - to establish the basics of the fixture within target media. i.e. Diary Dates pages

[INSERT HUNT POINT-TO-POINT LOGO ALONGSIDE SPONSOR LOGO if applicable]

MEDIA RELEASE

DATE 2016

HEADLINE SHOULD BE IN SAME FONT AND SIZE AND IN THE CENTRE

THE [NAME OF HUNT] POINT-TO-POINT

DATE OF EVENT

WEB URL *if applicable*

All text in the body of a press release font should be the same size and font and justified.

[Details of fixture] Gates open from; [time] Entertainment starts at [time]. First Race: [time]. Location: [brief description of location and postcode]

Entry on the gate from: [£ Price].

For more details and to book advanced tickets visit [url for website]

Ends

For more information on this press release please contact; [Full Name, Email, Phone]

Notes

Provide detailed information about the point to point here.



FICTIONAL PRESS RELEASE

(This is a fictitious news story and its content is not accurate. This is an example to help you consider the human and equine interest stories that may surround the point-to-point to help gain media coverage.)

Objective - to provide media with a news story around the fixture. Circulated nearer the time of the point-to-point

MEDIA RELEASE

DATE 2016

FRANKEL AND SIR ANTHONY TO TEAM UP AT *(name of Point-to-Point)*

THE [NAME OF HUNT] POINT-TO-POINT

DATE OF EVENT

WEB URL

Frankel has been announced as making surprise come back out of retirement. The highest rated racehorse ever who was unbeaten in all of his starts, has left the breeding barn's and has been entered into the (sponsor name) confined race at the (insert name) Point-to-Point on *(Insert Date)*.

Furthermore, Frankel will be the first runner for first season point-to-point trainer Sir Anthony McCoy. Sir Anthony, who has no less than twenty consecutive Champion Jump Jockey titles to his name has announced he is now training Point-to-Pointer's from his Lambourn Stables.

Commenting ahead the *(Name of Point to Point)*, Sir Anthony said;

"As expected Frankel is working very well at home and we can't wait for his point-to-pointing debut at the *(name of point-to-Point)*. I have even been tempted to come out of retirement so I may have the ride on him but decided my arms may not be up to the job anymore!"

[Details of fixture] Gates open from; *[time]* Entertainment starts at *[time]*. First Race: *[time]*. Location: *[brief description of location and postcode]*

Entry on the gate from: *[£ Price]*.

For more details and to book advanced tickets visit *[url for website]*

Ends

For more information on this press release please contact; *[Full Name, Email, Phone]*

Notes

Provide detailed information about the point to point here.

