

THE HIGH-5 MULTIPLE DISTRICT 410 LIONS AWARENESS DRIVE

In pursuit of the marketing objectives of the Multiple District 410, I have proposed that all Lions Clubs in the MD participate in a project which should take place on the same date, at approximately the same time, across our entire Multiple District.

My proposal :

Project name : Lions High-5 Day
Date : January 15, 2011 (Saturday closest to Melvin Jones' birthday)
Time : Between 09:00 and 14:00
Venue : At a local shopping mall or something similar
Objective : To create visibility of Lions having fun
Outcome : Awareness

Synopsis :

The **primary objective** is to engage the public in a fun exercise, causing them to pause for a moment, asking question as to who we are and complimenting our efforts.

Secondary objectives could be numerous and may differ from Club to Club. These could be, but not limited to :

- Recruiting new members
- Raising/collecting tins of dog food/bottles of water/exercise books, etc. for distribution to needy
- Collecting funds
- Driving this simultaneously for awareness of hunger, cancer, gender issues, etc.

In order to ensure success, one key ingredient is that the public should not be expected to "pay" for their participation

Should this project prove to be successful and repeated on annual basis, we could, in future on MD level decide what we want to link this to with possible national sponsorship – but one step at a time

The Windhoek Lions Club ran with this project as a trial run and I wish to share the "recipe" with you so that it may be rolled out on a similar basis across Southern Africa.

Preparation :

The clubs may have to reserve a spot on the said day at the local mall. It may involve approaching the necessary authorities to obtain permission for this project. *The Windhoek Lions managed to secure a spot at a local shopping mall; we emphasized that we are a service organization, explained the benefit of the project, and we were allocated a spot – unfortunately not as hot as we had hoped – but at no cost to us.*

Identify your secondary objective. *Windhoek Lions Club undertook to give away 1 cup of maize meal for every high-5 we would receive. Doing the number crunching we knew that we would at most receive 4000 high-5's which would amount to 1 ton of maize meal. A ton of maize meal would cost us N\$ 7000 and we were prepared to carry this cost. We did, however, approach the local miller and when we explained what we wanted to do, they donated the ton of maize meal without any hesitation*

The Clubs would then have to approach local media and ask for awareness drives. This could be an advertisement in papers, DJ's talking about it over local radio, posters on billboards, etc. *The Windhoek Lions approached a local radio station, sold the above idea to them and all DJ's during their respective slots, a week prior to the event, spoke about this project – at no costs to the Club. We also approached the commercial, free-to-air television station and asked them to cover the event for their news bulletin.*

Because this is an awareness exercise, it is important to create a lasting (this is a relative concept) memory of the event in the mind of the participating public *The Windhoek Lions Club had printed a little red hand which was stuck on the participant's shirt/collar, hoping that others would ask what it was, and jolting their memory every time they see it again – that day. Cost 23 cents per sticker*

Because it is an awareness drive and ideally the Clubs should not bear unnecessary costs the Clubs may want to consider a cost-recovery exercise. *The Windhoek Lions Club sourced red lollipops, we stuck a little black high-5 hand on it and offered it to the participants/public at a donation of N\$ 2-00.*

The setting must be such that the public is curious as to what is happening and should ideally gather around. *The Windhoek Club built a small stage (consisting of stacked pallets covered by carpets) and surrounded the stage with Lions banners, posters, boards (as well as the obligatory Namib Mills banners). We had wanted some form of entertainment (music, master of ceremonies with PA system) but the mall disapproved this.*

It is crucial to **count** the number of high-5's received, for two reasons. Firstly, the public wants to see how many high-5's have been given (the individual realizing he/she gave the 700th high-5) because it creates a kind of "feeding frenzy" and people queue to give high-5's. Secondly, I would like to keep track of how many high-5's the Lions received over the entire project. To this end it is important to

have a counter. The counter can be manual with flip-over numbers, it can be electronic, it can be simple, it can be complex. *The Windhoek Lions Club used a PowerPoint slide with multi media projector, changing the slide every time a high-5 was received. This allowed us to keep the message constant on every slide.*

Finally, it would be good to have an additional drawing card. Clubs can consider involving a local celebrity to assist. It could be a local artist, the Mayor/Councilor, sport hero, etc. *The Windhoek Lions Club was extremely fortunate to get Miss Namibia involved who managed to draw a huge crowd.*

The day of the event :

All plans having been set in motion, the members of the Windhoek Lions Club gathered at 08:00 to set up the stage. Traditionally all shops only open by 09:00 in the mall and we wanted to be ready to meet the crowd.

We were ready on time and the Club President took the stage. Other Lions walked about and enticed public to participate, other again stuck the stickers on the participants after they left the stage, others manned the counter, others manned a Lions Info Stand, and others tried to get donations for the lollipops.

It is crucial that all Lions participate, as much needs doing on the ground. We aimed at a 4-hour project and managed to close shop at 13:00. Club size permitting, Lions can come and go but **it is important to have Lions on the ground and they must show to be having fun.** We all wore Lions clothes and attempted to come across as a unified group of volunteers, having fun in assisting the needs of the community.

We decided to have the President receive all the high-5's but this role can be rotated. One's hand does sting after a couple of hundred high-5's.

Outcome for Windhoek Lions Club:

- 2144 high-5's in 4 hours
- 8576 people "more" aware of Lions (2144 x 4, on average)
- 536kg of maize meal made available for needy (we eventually gave the entire ton of maize meal away, stating that Namib Mills topped it up so they also got great mileage out of it)
- Lions invigorated by successful project
- 23 names from public put forward who are interested to find out more about Lions (we had and will again have orientation meeting and hopefully boost our membership)
- Two 3 minute news clips (one of the project and one of the hand-over of the maize meal) on national television with estimated viewership of 450 000

Lessons learnt:

- Pallets are not ideal, they slip on tiled floor and tend to separate, leaving potholes

- We had too few Lions on the ground, we hardly managed to “sell” any lollipops but, once people realize we don’t expect them to pay for a high-5, they are willing to make a donation. One customer donated N\$ 100 without blinking an eyelid. (We managed to raise N\$ 577-00 but the potential is much greater)
- Having had music (or a PA system) there would have been of immense help to draw an even bigger crowd – this could be a consideration when choosing the venue
- The Info Stand must be geared, have pamphlets available, pictures of past Club activities, ready to give answers, etc.
- Don’t make the stage too high – many people wanted to participate but could not climb up on stage (were too old, on crutches, in wheelchairs) and President needs to step off stage to take the high-5. The temptation is to have a high stage but it will be self-defeating
- We took a decision to have a “natural” flow – President is stationary, participants step onto stage from one angle only and step off at opposite side, there they get sticker stuck on shirt. Taking high-5’s from all angles can prove to be chaotic, makes counting difficult

I have included a DVD of raw footage as to what it looked like on the ground. It worked for us but the recipe explained here is not cast in concrete and I primarily would want Clubs to give it a try – for the fun of it.

With kind regards,

Holger
MDC Marketing