



# 2000-2001 Public Relations Operations Manual

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# PUBLIC RELATIONS

## INTRODUCTION

Greeks are constantly under fire. Many groups simply have a negative perception of the Greek system, especially men's fraternities. Our actions in the '60s, '70s, '80s, and the 1990s have created a public relations nightmare. Those outside the Greek system have based their opinions on facts presented to them by the actions of a few fraternities, the media's portrayal of Greeks, and their own personal experiences. These sources, coupled with misconceptions presented by movies such as Animal House, TV talk shows and editorials have scarred the Greek system. We have a long way to go in regaining the prestige fraternities once held in society.

It is a two-front battle. The battle begins in your chapter. If the public's concerns are actually practiced in your chapter -- you need to "clean up your act." A few bad chapters will ruin public relations for the entire system. When fraternities stop hazing, abusing alcohol, mistreating women and being "out of control," the articles in the paper won't relate to negative facts.

The other front is dealing with your various publics. It requires a proactive strategy that presents your fraternity and the Greek system in a positive light. We cannot afford to sit back and hope that our good actions are noticed -- we need to present them to our public and ensure the message is heard, understood and accepted.

"An organization's public image  
consists of the essential qualities  
attributed to it by its publics"

-Craig E. Aronoff

-Otis W. Baskin

This manual is designed to help your chapter focus its operations toward fostering a positive public image. It will outline various programs your chapter can implement and also provide steps to present them to your public. Other features include surveys to determine your perception, how to organize a Public Relations (PR) Committee, each officer's role in PR, presenting PR to your new members and implementing necessary changes in your chapter.

Information in this manual was gathered from various sources including the MIFCA/MAPCA Conference, Norman E. Allen of Phi Delta Theta, The Delta Chi Public Relations Brief, Public Relations Writing Fundamentals, the Programmer's Publicity Guide and selected notes from the California State University - Fresno Journalism Department.

## THE PUBLIC RELATIONS PROCESS

Identify your publics:

Public Relations begin with perception. The public has a perception of your chapter and the Greek System that, whether right or wrong, needs to be addressed as if it is right. Their beliefs stem from years of press coverage, movies, experiences and stories. Our starting point needs to be identifying who our publics are and how they perceive us.

Match their concerns to your behavior:

The next step is evaluating your chapter and your Greek system. Do the concerns of your public appear in the activities and operations of your chapter? After comparing their concerns and your actions -- determine which areas need change or elimination.

"Good PR cannot help  
a poor organization"

-Dr. Doug Cords

Clean up your act:

The first step of any PR campaign, starts inside your chapter. You will need to improve your level of operations and conduct to a point acceptable by the standards of your public. This includes the elimination of hazing, responsible use of alcohol, not condoning activities and programs that degrade or mistreat women, zero tolerance of drug use/sale by chapter members, contributing to your campus community, and being seen as a positive influence in the classroom and in other campus organizations.

"Anything anyone sees you do  
is Public Relations"

College Fraternity Editors Association

Organize a proactive PR campaign:

It is important to be proactive in your PR. This means that PR has a constant emphasis within your chapter -- it is not used as a response to bad press or criticism. An outstanding opportunity for proactive PR is during your period of change. Having outside sources help your chapter through change can help your image with that group.

Maintenance of a good chapter image:

Maintenance consists of implementing a strong public relations emphasis in your new member program, your officer responsibilities and your chapter activities. Keep in close contact with your various publics and keep them informed as to your progress and current events. It is one thing to bring your chapter to an acceptable level -- it is quite another thing to strive to be the best you can be and foster constant improvement.

Keep in good contact with the International Headquarters:

When your chapter does community service projects, or any activity that puts the chapter in a positive light, make sure the International Headquarters knows about it. The International Headquarters would like to tell other chapters about your success in publications like "Best of the Best". If something bad does happen, it is necessary that you contact the International Headquarters immediately. The International Headquarters staff can help guide you through the situation, avoiding unnecessary "bad press." Too often, when something of a serious nature occurs, it is the "brainless" response to the situation that makes it worse.

Mail information regarding your recent successes to:

Theta Chi Fraternity  
c/o Director of Chapter Operations  
3330 Founders Road  
Indianapolis, Indiana 46268-1333

If something bad occurs, call the Theta Chi Fraternity International Headquarters at:

(317) 824-1881 and ask for the  
Director of Chapter Development

## SECTION 1: IDENTIFYING YOUR PUBLIC SEGMENTS

The "public" actually consists of many groups who are inside and outside of the Greek community. In general, for purposes of this manual, the public consists of groups of people who are affected directly and indirectly from the actions of your chapter and/or Greek system.

The public can be broken down as follows:

### **The Campus Community:**

- Faculty
- Administration
- Non-Greek students
- Prospective members
- Men's and Women's fraternities on campus
- The Interfraternity and Panhellenic Councils
- Student government and other student organizations
- The campus press

### **The Theta Chi Public:**

- Chapter members: including members who live in the chapter house and those who do not
- Neophytes of your chapter
- New members of your chapter
- International Headquarters and Consultant staff
- Grand Chapter and regional volunteers
- Other chapters of Theta Chi
- Alumni of your chapter and others in the area

### **Friends of Theta Chi:**

- Parents of chapter members and new members
- Guests at your chapter house/events
- Business contacts
- Employees of your chapter

### **The General Community:**

- Civic leaders
- Neighbors
- The media
- High school students/parents
- The general public

As you can see, almost everyone needs to be taken into consideration when organizing events and conducting the affairs of your fraternity. The next step is to determine how each group views Greeks. Then, using the form on page 8, rank the degree of their perception.

To discover their perception you will need to do some basic research. The use of a questionnaire can be valuable. The Greek Life Questionnaire on page 7 should be distributed to the various target publics in quantities that will give you a good feel of their position. Usually about ten to each group does the trick. This Greek Life Questionnaire is designed for overall impressions of the Greek System.

Those sources close to your chapter, i.e., friends, business contacts, and alumni, will respond with comments more specific to your chapter, than the system in general -- keep that in mind. Whatever you do -- **DO NOT ASSUME YOU KNOW THE IMPRESSION OF A TARGET PUBLIC.** You will be surprised to discover the positives and negatives and where they come from.

Once this information is gathered from the questionnaire, it should be sorted and deciphered. A general impression from each group will be determined. On the Public Relations Target form, page 8, you will record each public's impression of Greeks. This will provide you a work sheet to help the chapter determine areas of concentration.

The information from these two sheets will be combined to complete the Public Relations Target Profile, page 9. Each sheet should contain the prevalent opinions of Greeks, where the opinions come from, and a plan to address these opinions. This profile can be given to the appropriate officer or committee that will address this target group.

One last tool to use is a Chapter Overview on page 11. This should be distributed to all members of the chapter for an HONEST assessment of the chapter. This is not going to be given to any outside sources -- it will be to compare the internal and external opinions of Greek Life to determine if your chapter is part of the solution, or part of the problem.

## GREEK LIFE QUESTIONNAIRE

1. What is your perception of the Greek system?

- |   |   |                                   |
|---|---|-----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Unnecessary              | <input type="checkbox"/> Out of Control | <input type="checkbox"/> Negative |
| <input type="checkbox"/> No opinion               | <input type="checkbox"/> Positive       | <input type="checkbox"/> Valuable |
| <input type="checkbox"/> An Asset to College Life |   |                                   |

2. List three concerns of Greek life at \_\_\_\_\_ University.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

3. List three ways Greeks contribute to campus life.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

4. What contact have you had with the Greek system?  
(i.e. rush, membership, friends, activities, incidents, etc.)

5. If no contact -- from where do you draw your impressions?

6. Please describe your experience with Greek organizations.  
(positive or negative)

The information provided is being used for developing better public relations for our Greek system. Any specific suggestions you have that will help Greeks become better assets to the campus and community are greatly appreciated. Thank you.

Please return this questionnaire to \_\_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_\_.

## THETA CHI FRATERNITY PUBLIC RELATIONS TARGETS

Directions: Rank each PR Target's perception of the Greek system, based on the results of the Greek life questionnaire.

<b>The campus community:</b>	Poor	OK	Good
Faculty	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
Administration	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
Non-Greek students	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
Prospective members	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
Men's and women's fraternities on campus	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
Student government and other student groups	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
The campus press	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]

<b>The Theta Chi Public:</b>	Poor	OK	Good
Chapter members: in house	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
out of house	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
New Members	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
International Headquarters	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
Grand Chapter and regional volunteers	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
Other chapters of Theta Chi	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
Alumni of your chapter and others in the area	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]

<b>Friends of Theta Chi:</b>	Poor	OK	Good
Parents	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
Guests	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
Business contacts	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
Employees of your chapter	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]

<b>The General Community:</b>	Poor	OK	Good
Civic leaders	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
Neighbors	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
The media	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
High school students/parents	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
The general public	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]

## **THETA CHI PUBLIC RELATIONS TARGET PROFILE**

Target Group:

Negative perceptions:

Positive perceptions:

How they determined the perception:

Ways we can address their perception:

Timetable/PR plan:

Evaluation/feedback:

## PUBLIC RELATIONS

1. Which terms best describe the relationships of the members within the chapter?

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Everyone gets along great | <input type="checkbox"/> Some minor incidents   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Some isolated problems    | <input type="checkbox"/> Some cliques           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Division in the chapter   | <input type="checkbox"/> Brother bashing occurs |

2. On a scale from 1 (low) to 10 (high), rate the chapter's performance in the following areas:

- |  |       |
|--|-------|
| -Friendliness and reception of phone calls       | _____ |
| -Regular attendance at all classes on time       | _____ |
| -Friendliness to unidentified visitors           | _____ |
| -Conduct at athletic and other university events | _____ |
| -Participation in Greek events                   | _____ |
| -Participation in campus events                  | _____ |
| -Participation in community events               | _____ |
| -Participation in Theta Chi events               | _____ |
| 3. Where does your chapter rank?                 | _____ |

- |  |     |    |
|--|-----|----|
| -Are you in the top 1/3 of fraternities in GPA on campus?                                      | Yes | No |
| -Are you above the All Men's GPA on campus?  | Yes | No |
| -Are more than 2/3 of your members involved in a campus organization in addition to Theta Chi? | Yes | No |
| -Do you have an IFC or student government officer?   | Yes | No |
| -Is your chapter above the average chapter size on campus?                                     | Yes | No |

4. Does your chapter visit many other chapters in your region? Who?      Yes    No
5. Do other chapters visit your chapter? Who?                                      Yes    No
6. Which fraternities do you get along with?
7. Which fraternities do not get along with you?
8. Which women's fraternities do you get along with?
9. Which women's fraternities do not get along with you?
10. What major incidents has your chapter experienced in the last five years that have had a negative affect on your image?
11. What major incidents have occurred to the Greek System in the last five years that have negatively affected its image?
12. How would you describe your chapter?
- |    |                                       |                                     |   |
|----|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---|
| a. | <input type="checkbox"/> Shy          | <input type="checkbox"/> Friendly   | <input type="checkbox"/> Aggressive     |
| b. | <input type="checkbox"/> Lazy         | <input type="checkbox"/> Gets By    | <input type="checkbox"/> Hard Working   |
| c. | <input type="checkbox"/> Disorganized | <input type="checkbox"/> Organized  | <input type="checkbox"/> Very Organized |
| d. | <input type="checkbox"/> Struggling   | <input type="checkbox"/> Improving  | <input type="checkbox"/> OK as is       |
| e. | <input type="checkbox"/> Bottom 1/3   | <input type="checkbox"/> Middle 1/3 | <input type="checkbox"/> Top 1/3        |
13. What behaviors exist in your chapter that need to be eliminated and/or controlled that confirm the fears of your publics?
- Hazing
  - Alcohol emphasis in all activities
  - Alcohol abuse by members
  - Drug use/abuse/sale by members at any time
  - Racist attitudes
  - Sexist attitudes
  - Anti-intellectualism (if you have to ask -- check it off)
  - Other. Please specify\_\_\_\_\_

Return this form to \_\_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_\_.

## SECTION 2: CLEAN UP YOUR ACT

For a business to be successful it needs to have a good marketing/public relations campaign and a good product or service. Having only one of these features will guarantee failure in the long run. Likewise, with a fraternity chapter, you must have a good public relations program and a good chapter. If you have a good public relations program, and a bad chapter -- it results in more negative views from the public. You appear as hypocrites and liars in addition to being seen as negative. If you have a good chapter, but poor PR, no one knows of your actions and the perceptions of your public do not change. To be successful, you must have both.

The changes start with your chapter evaluation. Many times when you are part of an organization, it is hard to get an overall view of its quality and value. By combining external and internal opinions towards your chapter, you can determine what areas need to be addressed.

Enthusiasm is contagious,  
so is laziness;  
Which is prevalent in your chapter?  
-Unknown

The changes can only take place when the chapter leadership has a focus. A set of short-term and long-term goals is crucial. There can be some brothers who feel that it doesn't matter what "others" think and others who are "comfortable in the chapter as is." Subscribing to these thoughts are dangerous since society's demands are always changing and a chapter has to keep pace. Chapters that succumb to these thoughts are stuck since they aim to be only "good enough" -- not to be "the best they can be." Every chapter needs to aim for the top. This will ensure that your chapter will eliminate any potentially dangerous activities and attitudes and give it an avenue for some positive public relations. Start changing now. Be proactive -- not reactive.

## SECTION 3: ORGANIZING A POSITIVE PR CAMPAIGN

Your Public Relations campaign will begin as the chapter begins its internal changes. One crucial element will be the development of a Public Relations Committee. Depending on the size of your chapter, the committee can take different forms. For most chapters, these brothers should be selected outside of the executive council. They would work in conjunction with officers of the chapter as well as other committees in assigning public relations duties and coordinating help on special projects. The vice president is to oversee the committee.

In smaller chapters -- the public relations committee can be comprised of chapter officers. The officers that would have a natural tie to a chapter's public relations are the president, secretary, philanthropy chairman, rush chairman, and alumni representative. These officers have major roles in public relations, so in small chapters they will have to work harder for the chapter to have a PR campaign.

One key note -- chapters that are able to form a separate committee should not use the philanthropy chairman as the public relations chairman. These two functions involve different skills and agendas. They are related in the sense that philanthropy is a SMALL part of public relations, but in almost all cases, a philanthropy chairman does not have time to organize an event AND solicit news coverage and attendance. This is where the committee can be a real asset.

Chapter Organizations Structure for Public Relations:

- 
- Vice President ----- Executive Council  
oversees
  - Public Relations Chairman

Committee:

- 1 Assistant
- 2 Members
- 2 New Members

works with:

- Executive Council Officers
- Philanthropy Committee
- Scholarship Committee
- Alumni Representative
- Recruitment Committee
- The Interfraternity Council

Once your committee is in place, they will need to identify the public relations tools and programs they have at their disposal, match them into each target public with a plan (see following page), and select officers and/or committees to help implement them.

## PUBLIC RELATIONS

Target Public: \_\_\_\_\_

Select possible resources to reach target public:

The Media:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Campus Newspaper      | <input type="checkbox"/> Local Newspaper     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Local Television News | <input type="checkbox"/> Local Radio         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Campus Radio          | <input type="checkbox"/> Campus Publications |

Chapter Sources:

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Newsletters         | <input type="checkbox"/> Personal Contact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fliers              | <input type="checkbox"/> Correspondence   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Positive Visibility | <input type="checkbox"/> Other            |

Programming Ideas:

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Guest Speakers         | <input type="checkbox"/> Service Projects  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fund raising/Donations | <input type="checkbox"/> Sponsorships      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Open House             | <input type="checkbox"/> Advisory Programs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Other             |

These sources are broad in nature. The details of them will come after they are attributed to the different public segments. The following descriptions of these tools and programs are designed to get your creativity started. No list can be all-inclusive. These ideas should be built upon and improved.

### **Campus Newspaper:**

Most chapters complain that the newspaper hates them or does not cover their stories. The relations with them will be addressed later in this manual. There are many ways to receive exposure in the campus paper. The easiest is to purchase advertising space. You can use this space for announcements, accomplishments, and general publicity. Other avenues include utilizing the paper's Calendar section, which is usually free. Also available for minimal expense is the classified section. As for positive reporting coverage -- chapters should communicate with proper use of press releases, personal contact and public service announcements (PSAs). Another option is to have someone from your chapter, or even a "neutral" source, write a contributing article ready for publication. If worse comes to worse -- utilize your faculty advisor to contact the adviser to the paper.

### **The Media:**

It has always been difficult for most chapters to communicate effectively with local media. It is understood that when something negative happens to a chapter, it is almost certain that the media will cover and report it. When this happens, most chapters cry, "The media doesn't like us." Most of the time their coverage stems from a fraternity chapter not communicating with the media previously. This leaves the fraternity in a position of reaction that sets them apart.

In order to employ proactive public relations, chapters need to develop a working relationship with the press. Each chapter should have consistent programming and communication. The media has standard communication procedures that need to be understood and employed by fraternities. Press releases, public service announcements, contributing articles, personal contact and co-sponsorship are some of the better, accepted means of working with the media.

### **Public Service Announcements:**

PSAs are used for radio and television media to gain publicity and recognition for public service events. They are not used for other types of publicity; they must have a service oriented message. These spots are free and they are selected purely on the interest of the event as described in your press release and public service announcement.

The PSA is written to be heard, rather than read, by the intended audience. It should be written in a conversational tone. The announcer must sound as if he is talking to the audience -- not reading to them.

In order for your public service announcement to be selected, it should be received by the station no later than 4 weeks prior to the release date. The standard length of a PSA can be 10, 20, 30 or 60 seconds. It is best to call the station and ask for its preference. Also ask for the name of whom to address the announcement. It is better to use the person's name on the envelope than his or her position or title. This holds true for all correspondence.

For televised PSAs, you may have the option of providing a video or slides. Be sure to take advantage of this opportunity. Also, screen the content of such and make sure there is nothing negative in its content -- especially alcohol or alcohol advertising.

The announcement can be in two forms; audio or written. An audiotape should be timed within the chosen length, sounding smooth and professional.

The written form can be done in two formats depending if there are supporting visual aids. Examples are on the following pages.

## RADIO COPY

Public Service Announcement

CONTACT: Name, title  
Organization  
Address  
Phone

PROJECT TITLE: RELEASE DATE:

SECONDS: ENDING DATE:

ANNOUNCER:

THE TEXT OF THE PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT SHOULD BE EASY

TO READ. IT IS RECOMMENDED TO TYPE THIS SECTION TRIPLE SPACED AND IN ALL CAPS.

REMEMBER THAT THIS IS BEING READ AND SHOULD BE WRITTEN AS SUCH -- IN A CONVERSATIONAL TONE. THE TEXT ALSO HAS A TIME LIMIT WHICH NEEDS TO BE AS CLOSE AS POSSIBLE WITHOUT EXCEEDING IT. A GENERAL GUIDELINE PROVES THAT EIGHTY WORDS EQUALS THIRTY SECONDS, AND ONE HUNDRED AND SIXTY WORDS EQUALS SIXTY SECONDS. HOWEVER, IT IS BEST TO USE A STOPWATCH AND TEST THE

ACTUAL TIME AT A REGULAR PACE.

\*Don't forget to remind the listener who is providing the announcement at the end.

## TELEVISION COPY

### Public Service Announcement

CONTACT: Name, title  
Organization  
Address  
Phone

PROJECT TITLE:

RELEASE DATE:

SECONDS:

ENDING DATE:  
VISUALLY.

VIDEO:

IN THIS SECTION YOU WILL NEED  
TO DESCRIBE THE VIDEO PORTION  
IN REFERENCE TO THE AUDIO.  
FOR EXAMPLE:

0-10 SECONDS: SLIDE ONE,  
CLOSEUP OF CHAPTER HOUSE

10-20 SECONDS: SLIDE TWO,  
CLOSEUP OF HOMELESS SHELTER

20-30 SECONDS: SLIDE THREE,  
PHONE NUMBER AND REMINDER.

THIS SECTION SHOULD BE TYPED  
IN ALL CAPS AND SINGLE-SPACED.  
IF USING VIDEO, BE SURE TO  
DESCRIBE WHAT IS HAPPENING

AUDIO:

THIS SECTION WILL BE WRITTEN AND  
TIMED TO THE VIDEO PORTION FOR THE  
ANNOUNCER. BE SURE TO ACCOUNT  
FOR A CHANGING SLIDE OR CHANGING

SCENE.

THIS SECTION SHOULD ALSO BE TYPED  
ALL CAPS AND SINGLE-SPACED.

## PRESS/ NEWS RELEASES

A press release is the provision of information to a selected media like newspaper, magazine, radio or television. The information generally satisfies public curiosity, announces a public service or presents facts from a given situation. With this in mind, there are two types of press releases: advance and follow-up.

Advance releases, as the name implies, are released in advance of an event. They basically announce the event and/or serve as reminders in support of other advertising efforts.

On the other hand, follow-up releases present news that has happened. For our purposes, they will be beneficial in reporting the results of a philanthropic effort, a chapter accomplishment or in reporting a positive trend in the Greek system.

The release should be brief and should be geared to answer who, what, where, when, why and occasionally, how. In preparing your press release, remember the following:

1. Keep releases direct and factual. Supplemental news can be provided on a separate fact sheet included in the release.
2. The information included should be appropriate to the medium to which it is sent. Do not bother editors with material you know they cannot use. It is best to contact the service editor for any questions pertaining to any guidelines.
3. The contact person from your chapter should provide his name, title, organization, address, and phone number in case the editor has any questions.
4. A release line should also be included at the top of the page indicating the date for release. If the release is distributed in advance, the release should read, "Hold for release..."
5. The standard format for most press releases calls for the use of 8-1/2" x 11" paper, double spaced copy, wide margins, and copy on only one side of the paper.
6. Releases, which run more than one page in length, should carry a page number at the center top of each page beginning with the second. Also, each page should end with a complete sentence in case the pages are separated. To indicate that the material is continued on another page, "MORE" is generally typed at the center at the bottom of the page. Usually "-30-" is typed in the center at the bottom of the last page of a release to indicate the end of the copy.
7. When photographs are included with a release, they should always include the caption line glued to the bottom of the border with rubber cement. The name, address, and telephone number of contact should appear on the back of the photo. In most cases the photo should be black and white for the best reproduction.

\*\*Adapted from Public Relations: The Profession and the Practice. (1983)  
The Ten Commandments of News Releases:

Thou shalt be selective with the releases thou sendest. Don't waste your ammunition on every little story possibility. Stories that bore you can bore reporters as well and leave a bad taste in their mouth.

Thou shall not send multiple copies of the same release. It can cause confusion and waste time. If you do your homework and send it to the right department, your story has a good chance of being selected.

Thou shalt have contact names and phone numbers on all releases. Reporters must be able to contact someone who can clarify information. Generally use two contact people and include business and home phone numbers.

Thou shalt know deadlines. It's a good idea to let reporters know what is coming. This way they can properly plan for it and do some homework.

Thou shalt follow up with a telephone call. The follow up call should just be a check to see if the release was received and if it is in the right department. Don't try to determine if it will be used -- doing so disturbs the press.

Thou shalt take "no" for an answer. If, after having given it your best shot, the answer is "no," forget it. Don't be offended, and don't take it personally.

Thou shalt find out about standard criteria. Be familiar with the different media you will be selecting. Promotions and position changes occur frequently. Also know which department reports which types of stories.

Thou shalt know and respect the meaning of "exclusive." This means giving the story to one medium at the expense of all other media. Reporters who get burned tend to remember.

Thou shalt not send releases to people who left the publication years ago. Editors tend to frown upon mail addressed to a displaced, or sometimes deceased, predecessor.

Thou shalt get to know reporters before needing one. Develop a working relationship with a contact person in each of your desired media. They might not use all of your releases, but it helps to treat them like people. Using them as speakers at "Guest Night" can help.

## **SAMPLE ADVANCED PRESS RELEASE**

Date: April 10, 1992

FOR RELEASE: April 25-31

CONTACT: Frederick N. Freeman, Director of Public Relations  
Theta Chi Fraternity, Alpha Chapter  
3330 Founders Road  
Indianapolis, IN 46268-1333  
(317) 824-1881

Theta Chi Fraternity is collecting cans of food for the Homeless Outreach of downtown Indianapolis. Members of the fraternity will be going door to door from 12:00 noon to 4:00 p.m. on Saturday, May 2, 1992 in the college area.

Residents who won't be home will be able to leave cans of food at the following drop sites: Castleton Mall, University entrance, and at the Homeless Outreach of downtown. Theta Chi's will be identified with red baseball caps and will be standing by big, red barrels.

There will be a competition for media groups. The group that collects the most cans will be presented with a special plaque from the Homeless Outreach and Theta Chi Fraternity.

## **SAMPLE FOLLOW-UP PRESS RELEASE**

Date: May 5, 1992

FOR RELEASE: Upon Receipt

CONTACT: Frederick N. Freeman, Director of Public Relations  
Theta Chi Fraternity, Alpha Chapter  
3330 Founders Road  
Indianapolis, IN 46268-1333  
(317) 824-1881

2,000 cans of food were collected last week for the Homeless Outreach of downtown Indianapolis. This effort, sponsored by Theta Chi Fraternity, was supported by residents in the college area and by local media. The Homeless Outreach reports that this donation will help 250 homeless residents eat next week. However, donations are still needed to continue this valuable program. John Jones, director of the Homeless Outreach, can be contacted at (317) 555-1234. The Homeless Outreach has been serving Indianapolis since 1986.

Theta Chi Fraternity's motto -- "The Helping Hand" was exemplified in this effort to help less fortunate citizens.

## CHAPTER PUBLIC RELATIONS RESOURCES

Newsletters can be an effective method of communicating with desired public segments. They should be used to communicate with alumni of the chapter, parents of current chapter members, friends of Theta Chi, advisors, Theta Chi chapters in the region or area, and selected Theta Chi officials including the International Headquarters, Grand Chapter and Regional Staff.

Newsletters should contain current events and news that is relevant to what each market wants to hear. You want to put yourself in their shoes and answer the questions, or address the concerns, your public might have.

### Do's:

1. Scholarship information, results and achievements.
2. Philanthropic events.
3. Rush results and new member education update.
4. Alumni update, profile, success stories and network.
5. Calendar of events; guest speakers, alumni/parent gatherings, campus events and initiation.
6. Chapter accomplishments; most improved award, attendance award at conferences and/or conventions, home improvements etc.
7. "Thank you's;" be sure to thank people for donations of time, money and service.
8. Invite feedback, let your audience be a part of your fraternity.
9. Individual accomplishments; new officers, awards, graduating seniors and campus involvement.
10. Educate your audience on changes and improvements in your chapter. Be honest and informative.

### Don'ts:

1. Do not highlight parties. They tend to send the message of alcohol and de-emphasize scholarship.
2. Do not use pictures that contain alcohol or sexist material.
3. Do not overload the newsletter with chapter material. Use 2/3 of the newsletter for material that interests your readers.
4. Do not use cheap materials. Poor stapling, printing and poor design makes your organization look poor.
5. Do not ask for money. There are other opportunities for that. Just update each person on your fraternity's progress.
6. Do not leave people out. Constantly update your alumni list as well as friends, relatives and other targets. If one person receives a letter that others don't -- they tend to feel left out of the loop.
7. Do not use brothers' nicknames. Remember that your audience might not know who you are talking about.
8. Do not forget. Your newsletter should be sent regularly -- at a minimum twice a year.

## FLIERS

Fliers can take many forms and serve many purposes. They are generally used in recruitment, philanthropy promotion, and special event promotion. They can also be used to gain exposure, to communicate with the student body, and to inform. Fliers can generally be used to address groups within the campus community -- especially students. They can take different forms ranging from your basic 8 1/2" x 11" black on white to table tents placed in dining areas. Other forms include half-sheet handouts, posters, and banners.

The basic guidelines for these are similar. Basically, any material which represents Theta Chi Fraternity needs to be positive and portray the ideals and objectives of the fraternity. Don't use foul language or sexually suggestive material. Avoid being insensitive to other groups.

Be sure to get proper permission for posting fliers. Residence halls usually have strict rules. Also, the campus has limitations on where fliers can be placed. A fraternity that haphazardly places fliers can get in trouble and have the privilege withdrawn. This can also result in negative PR with faculty and administration -- even if the flier is good.

Keep in mind that litter is a problem as well. After an event, the chapter should remove any remaining fliers. A flier that stays up for weeks after its intended use can cause people to view your group as lazy.

The best fliers look sharp. Avoid cartoons, hand printing, heavy copy, and drawings. The best fliers are laser printed, provide basic information, and have a simple logo or design. The coat of arms, Greek letters, and creative borders can bring attention to your flier.

Hand drawn cartoons and print generally look sloppy and don't represent quality. People won't generally take the time to read the details of a flier. Use the flier to gain their attention and support other marketing efforts. A flier alone will not do the trick. Most drawings can kill the effectiveness of a flier. They tend to clutter the copy and anything worth drawing can be printed from computer graphics.

Avoid using a bull or an Ox as an icon for Theta Chi. Theta Chi is a fraternity -- not a farm. Since an Ox is, according to Webster's Dictionary, "a castrated, domesticated bull used as a draft animal," we do not want that to represent us!

## PUBLIC VISIBILITY

Everything your members do will effect a chapter's image. Public Relations needs to be understood by old and new members. Since the actions of a few can tarnish the rest of the group, a chapter needs to be aware and maintain standards of behavior. Implementing a "Code of Conduct" in line with our Third Objective will help. This should be upheld by a chapter standards or judicial board. Many times a chapter's responsible response to an irresponsible act can create positive public relations with those public segments that deal in discipline, especially the campus administration, law enforcement, and the International Headquarters. Sample programming for a code of conduct and standards board is available in Theta Chi Fraternity's Chapter Operations Manual: Vice President.

In general, the following areas should be addressed by the chapter to ensure positive visibility: T-shirts, appearance, conduct, themes for functions, spirit at events, and participation.

### **T-shirts:**

This is one of the most potentially explosive areas of chapter visibility. Most fraternity T-shirts are designed to represent major parties, events, recruitment, and other aspects of Greek life. At the same time, most fraternity T-shirts reinforce a negative perception of fraternity life by glorifying alcohol abuse, alcohol sponsorships, racism, sexism, elitism, and just plain stupid behavior.

It is a violation of our Risk Management and Standards program to co-sponsor an event with an alcohol distributor. Even if the shirt has a responsible drinking slogan like "Know when to say when" or "Friends don't let friends drive drunk", the shirt still says fraternities exist to drink alcohol. Although alcohol is a part of college life and society, we don't need to contribute to that perception. Instead of having alcohol sponsors on T-shirts -- use radio stations, record stores, restaurants (that make more than 50% of their revenue from food sales), and novelty stores in the college area.

The illustrations on T-shirts are another source of criticism and negative reinforcement. The pictures usually illustrate a sexist, racist, or alcoholic theme. Women with features over-emphasized, people suffering the affects of alcohol abuse, minorities portrayed in negative manner. Again, many chapters have adopted the bull or an ox as our mascot, this is a misnomer and should be avoided.

The last point on T-shirts is in reference to the name, letters, and coat of arms of Theta Chi. These are all copyrighted. Distributors who use our name, letters, or coat of arms improperly and without permission are subject to legal action. It is a privilege for a chapter to use Theta Chi's name, letters, and coat of arms. This privilege, if abused, can be revoked up to and including the revocation of a charter. One chapter's abuse of our name can ruin any other progress our Fraternity has made.

If you are unsure whether your T-shirt is acceptable, screen the idea through the following criteria:

- The T-shirt is consistent with Theta Chi's ideals and objectives.
- There are no references to alcohol in picture, logo or slogan.
- Women are not portrayed or referred to as sex objects and are portrayed with the proper dignity and respect.
- The slogan or pictures will not be seen offensive by a minority group.
- What would the different public segments think of the shirt.

T-shirts are a fantastic tool for positive public relations. They can show chapter spirit and unity at athletic events, university functions, and Greek events. During recruitment they are extremely helpful to aid in name recognition, additional exposure, and providing rush information. Shirts with large "OX" letters and with our colors are a fabulous icon for the fraternity.

### **Appearance:**

Image is very important in public relations. Your appearance can have an extremely positive effect on your perception. This appearance is beneficial with faculty, administration, other students, parents and alumni. The factors that contribute to your appearance as a group and individuals are attitude, dress and conduct.

Many chapters and brothers have an image that seems elitist. They have a "tough guy" image stemming from a chip on their shoulders. Their attitude is hostile and they display their pride by denouncing others or by being obnoxious. No wonder people on the "outside" criticize Greeks.

Chapter members should not be exclusive in their friends. Having friends outside the fraternity is as crucial as including these friends in chapter activities. The more people understand the fraternity -- the less it will be criticized. By cloaking fraternalism with extra secrecy -- apprehension is developed. The chapter and its members should be outgoing, friendly and helpful.

Dress is important as well. As a social organization, it is our mission to prepare our members for society. This includes presenting yourself in a way accepted by society. This does not mean that all members should dress alike or wear suits all the time. They should know when and how to dress appropriately for different situations. Many chapters look foolish, immature and lazy due to the fact that they are not concerned with their dress. In our Seventh Objective it states that the chapter's job is to correct defects in dress of its members.

Here are some good guidelines for how to dress for different occasions:

Formal (Tuxedo, Black tie):

- Chapter Formals/Banquets

Semi-Formal (Suit, Shirt & tie, Sport coat & slacks, dress shoes & socks):

- Guests, Guest Speakers
- Banquets
- Initiation
- New Member Ceremony
- Ritual Meeting
- Recruitment -- optional -- encouraged for leaders
- Job Interviews
- Important meetings with campus/public officials

Nice (Pants [not jeans], collared shirt, nice shoes)

- Recruitment -- everyone should make an effort to look good
- Philanthropic events
- Meetings with campus/public officials
- Parents' Day
- Alumni Events
- To classroom -- optional, but makes good impression

Casual (Pants, nice shorts, most shirts, no tears/tanks, no hats, good tennis shoes)

- To classroom
- Visible situations not mentioned above
- Meals at chapter
- Campus events

Dress Down (Old clothes, regular shorts, sweats, hats...)

- Leisure time
- House work, labor
- Participating in athletics

Remember these are guidelines -- not mandates. It is a fact that in society people judge others a lot on what they wear. Whether this is right or wrong -- we must understand this and take advantage of the public relations opportunity it presents.

Along with clothing, we need to make an effort to conduct ourselves properly. There is a time to "let loose" and there is a time to be serious. Your conduct greatly contributes to your appearance. People judge our fraternity on the quality of the people in it.

## SECTION 4: PUBLIC RELATIONS FOR YOUR PUBLICS

### THE CAMPUS COMMUNITY:

#### Faculty:

Use faculty as advisers: Faculty members have expertise in many areas that can help a chapter including finance, marketing (recruitment), and even public relations. These faculty should include members who are not Theta Chis. After a year of service they, if male, can be made alumnus members. If female, they can receive the Appreciation Award from the Grand Chapter. Take advantage of these under-utilized resources.

Watch your conduct in the classroom: Fraternity members who are late to class, disrupt class and ditch class, leave a negative impression with the professor. Be on time, attend regularly, participate, and meet with the professor outside of class.

Use "Guest Night" to invite a faculty member to speak: This is a good tool that can help faculty gain some insight to the fraternity and that can also help in a chapter's education. Examples include a faculty member talking on the history of the institution, current political events, or even scholarship.

Have a "Faculty Appreciation Dinner". This can be combined with the chapter scholarship banquet. It is an excellent opportunity for the faculty to see the emphasis we place on academics. It is also a chance to thank outstanding faculty members through awards. The chapter could sponsor some unique and creative awards like Most Creative Professor, Most Helpful Professor, and Teacher of the Year. Also use this to thank your advisors. Do not forget to invite the media.

Organize events with faculty. A faculty vs. fraternity softball (or any sport) game is an excellent opportunity to meet professors in a more casual setting. Another opportunity is to co-sponsor a philanthropic effort with faculty members. These make great press.

Send copies of your chapter newsletter to select faculty: Keep faculty informed on the progress of your chapter. If you want to be more sophisticated, create a special newsletter geared to faculty with an emphasis on scholarship, scholarship programming, and a calendar of faculty events. In most cases, it is OK to send your alumni/parent newsletter.

Use Positive Visibility at University events: Many faculty members are present at events such as football games, homecoming festivities, and even special events on campus. Avoid staging pranks or heckling. Try to support these activities with spirit and class, which will leave a good impression with the faculty in attendance.

**Administration:**

Attend regularly scheduled meetings with the Greek Advisor at least monthly: This will ensure that you are communicating with the Greek Affairs Department. Be open and honest and let them help. If your only contact with him/her is negative, then that will be the perception. Develop a good working relationship.

Invite the Greek Advisor to speak at "Guest Night:" The Greek advisor should be known to the whole chapter and he should know the whole chapter -- not just the leaders who come to his office. This will promote mutual understanding.

Invite other administrators to "Guest Night" or other fraternity activities: Some might include the University President, a member of the Board of Regents, someone in Student Affairs, someone from Admissions and Records, and even someone from the Athletic Department. They can speak on any topic, including "how to" and current events.

Send copies of your newsletter to administration: Obviously not every administrator will receive a copy. But by sending a copy to every department, there is a good chance it will be seen.

Get members involved in student organizations: These can include campus orientation guides, student government, IFC, departmental clubs, campus committees, and athletics. Many administrators are involved with these groups as well and it serves as a good opportunity to let them know who you are.

Send letters of "congratulations" or "thank you:" Many administrators and faculty members publish, receive awards, and/or make decisions that help Greeks. Let them know you appreciate their efforts.

**Non-Greek Students and Prospective Pledges:**

Market items that help students with your logo or information: Good examples include calendars with important dates (recruitment included) with advertising from local sources to supplement the cost, book covers, maps, and directories. These items should be given to students who live on campus as a resource provided by Greeks.

Utilize the campus press: Use advertising in the campus newspaper, have Greek materials included in registration materials, use press releases and public service announcements to get coverage of events, and try to get exposure through the campus radio station.

Sponsor scholarships for non-Greeks: Have applications for students based on need, achievement, and unique situations. This could include a foreign student, a re-entry student who works 40 hours and carries 18 units, or any other noteworthy accomplishment.

Open your chapter house: You can utilize your "Guest Night" for campus wide presentations. Invite students from the residence halls. Have an open house or sponsor a pep rally before a big athletic event.

Positive Visibility: Again, watch your actions. Don't discriminate against any minority groups -- members of these are potential members of your chapter. For good publicity, try breaking a world's record,

in addition to football and basketball -- support other athletic events as a group like softball, soccer, lacrosse, and water polo to name a few. Participate in orientation for new students, helping new students move into residence halls, having a "letters day," and involvement in campus activities and clubs.

Have exchanges with other clubs or residence halls: This serves many purposes, the main being the breaking of the barrier between Greeks and non-Greeks. It also can act as a springboard to get members from these groups to join the Fraternity.

Use fliers, posters, and banners: Chapters can show school spirit by hanging a banner at a football game. Also placing posters that say "Theta Chi backs the (school mascot)," or even just printing a message like "Theta Chi -- Alma Mater first and Theta Chi for Alma Mater" will give you exposure and present you in a positive light. These tools also support your personal recruitment effort.

Develop a positive recruitment campaign based on ideals and advantages of Greek life: For more information, consult Theta Chi Fraternity's [Chapter Operations Manual: Recruitment](#).

### **Men's and Women's Fraternities on Campus:**

Don't bash other Greeks: Inter-fraternalism should be paramount. It is OK to be rivals, but not enemies. If the Greek system is divided, it looks bad.

Be involved in IFC: A chapter should always be represented and should always strive to have an officer on IFC. If your IFC is "weak" or "doesn't like your chapter," get involved and make a difference.

Have functions with different groups: In addition to social exchanges and mixers, try co-sponsoring a philanthropy, new member education, or officer exchanges. Sports are another avenue for building better relations.

Send the different groups congratulatory cards, Christmas cards, and welcome back cards: This is good communication. Some other ideas include sending women's fraternities their flower and card on their founder's day (see appendix for list), congratulations to new officers, anniversary cards to fraternities, and even organize awards for them.

Send your chapter newsletter to the Greeks on campus: This shares ideas and will help them better understand the things they don't necessarily see in your chapter.

Start a Greek Newspaper for the system and other students: This can be a valuable tool to dispel myths, promote recruitment, and promote community service. It proves extremely valuable at institutions with an anti-Greek paper.

Don't steal or vandalize property: This can escalate into bad relations between chapters and send the wrong message to the campus.

### **The Interfraternity, Panhellenic, and Pan Hellenic Councils and all Greek Council:**

Be involved: Support the programs offered by these resources and become a part of their

programming and government.

Don't discriminate: These councils all deal with similar problems. If you are on one of these councils, make sure you cooperate with each other. As a chapter, your racist or sexist views can result in disciplinary action.

Sponsor a dinner for the officers from these groups: It is a great opportunity to meet them and hear of their goals and programs. Many times these programs include scholarships or opportunities for resume building projects. It also gives them the opportunity to find out more about your fraternity.

Send them a copy of your newsletter: For obvious reasons you want to share the good news of your chapter with the governing students in the Greek system.

### **Student Government and other Student Organizations:**

Run for office: Having Theta Chis in student government is a great way to gain exposure and credibility. It helps in recruitment as well as keeps you represented, in person, to the group.

Join campus clubs: Theta Chi alone cannot totally prepare a man for "the real world." Join professional or departmental clubs that will give you more exposure to your field. This helps propel Theta Chi's into prominent positions from having more background. It also helps your visibility on campus.

Invite them to "Guest Night:" These groups will support and learn from your guest speakers. Also let them be a part of a forum to present your chapter with their mission and provide information or make announcements.

### **The Campus Press: (If they are anti-Greek)**

Try co-sponsoring a philanthropy with their staff: This can help get them to see and be included in a positive aspect of Greek life.

Get involved: Have members apply for positions with the press. There are opportunities in advertising, journalism, and office work. Once you develop some personal friendships, they will start to know and understand you better. Do not sit back and complain -- do something to correct the situation.

Speak to them in their language: Utilize press releases and public service announcements. Even if they don't cover your story -- they will gradually see the positive things you do.

Have the advisors for the paper over for guest night: It is usually the students who have a problem with the fraternities. The advisor can be a guest speaker and get to know the chapter, which gives you an important contact.

## THE THETA CHI PUBLIC:

### **Chapter Members:**

Develop an awards program. Awards can help develop motivation and bring recognition to those whom do good work. These awards need to reinforce acceptable behavior. Good examples of awards to present are: Helping Hand, Outstanding Scholarship, Most Improved Scholarship, Outstanding Athlete, Best Attitude, Outstanding Committee Chairman, Outstanding Officer, Special Recognition for Campus Involvement, and other awards that help encourage other acts that benefit Theta Chi. These should be presented at a formal banquet or chapter dinner.

Develop a chapter phone tree: This is important to help keep the out of house brothers informed. If there are spur of the moment activities, changes in meetings, or any other news that is hard to send through the chapter -- a phone tree helps organize "the grapevine" so all brothers can be informed. This tool is a necessity for chapters that don't have housing, or don't have enough housing.

Develop a chapter newsletter: This is another tool that helps all brothers feel involved. The newsletter should contain important dates, policy changes, and recognition of brother's accomplishments, updates on conferences and conventions, and financial deadlines. This keeps the chapter well informed and serves as a backup to meetings.

Host a chapter retreat: A Brotherhood Retreat can be a great way to keep the brothers interested in Theta Chi. These retreats let all brothers contribute. They also go a long way in breaking up cliques and solving problems. For more information -- consult the Chapter Operations Manual: Retreats and Transition.

Have guest speakers: It is the role of the fraternity to develop our members socially, personally, and academically. The fraternity can keep its promise by having speakers address a variety of topics including resumes, study skills, alcohol/drug abuse, current events, dress for success, and other beneficial presentations.

### **New Members of Your Chapter:**

Don't haze: There is no worse public relations problem than being known as a hazing chapter. If you do haze your new members and one quits -- you can quickly gain a negative image.

Have new members serve on committees: If new members start to learn about and contribute to the chapter from the start -- they will be better and more loyal members of your organization. They will also learn more which prepares them for brotherhood.

Help them with their studies: The saddest thing that could happen is when a member or new member blames the chapter for a drop in grades. It is our duty to help our members -- especially our newest members -- DO BETTER by joining a fraternity than if they didn't join. Please consult our Chapter Operations Manual on Scholarship for more details.

### **International Headquarters and Consultant Staff:**

Communicate in a timely manner: This will ensure that the headquarters has enough information to make decisions concerning schedules, visits, programming, and support. Good communication with the Headquarters can result in good public relations in the Rattle, and Men Since '56. Chapters should send in examples of their accomplishments on a monthly basis. The officers should maintain phone contact regularly as well.

Be a good host for visits: Your hospitality during Leadership and Education Consultant visits and Headquarters staff visits goes a long way in their evaluation of chapters. The appearance of the house, friendliness of members, honesty of members, and attention to our needs are all areas that should be addressed. Always put yourself in their shoes. How would you like to go to a messy house, be offered a couch, be ignored for meals, and be treated as an outsider?

Cooperate with them: Take advantage of the resources, the networking, and the knowledge at the Headquarters. Chapters waste a lot of time when they don't take advantage of the services provided.

### **Grand Chapter and Regional Volunteers:**

Correspondence: This includes Christmas cards, thank you letters after visits, and invitations/announcements to/of chapter events. Your Regional Counselor should receive copies of your semester calendar, rush schedule, and other important dates during which he can schedule a visit.

Use them in new member education: The national fraternity always seems vast and impersonal to new members. If this aspect of fraternity can be presented by a member of the Official Family (Headquarters Staff, Regional Counselor, or ideally a Grand Chapter Officer) it will help the new members have a better contact.

### **Other Chapters of Theta Chi:**

Executive Retreats: This is a great way to start Inter-chapter relations with other schools that have Theta Chi chapters. Since most chapters are basically similar -- it is important not to let rivalry interfere with this objective. Executive officers face similar challenges and a retreat can be a learning experience for both groups.

Take advantage of regional conferences: The conference is an opportunity to prove to other chapters in the region that you are strong. Each chapter should strive to have over half of their members in attendance.

Schedule events together: Many chapters have developed good relations with a nearby chapter or even many chapters in their region. This can be done by having events together such as parties, softball games, university football game exchanges, and retreats.

Keep in touch: Many chapters have been able to save money by traveling together to Convention, sharing

rush events in nearby cities, and by combining efforts in locating alumni. Since we are an international fraternity -- we should not just operate as individual chapters.

**Alumni of your Chapter and others in the area:**

\*More advice and samples are available in the Chapter Operations Manual on Alumni Relations.

Develop an Alumni Newsletter: This should be sent on a quarterly basis. It should contain 75% alumni news and 25% chapter news. The focus needs to be on helping them know when alumni events at the chapter are scheduled, what other alumni are doing, and changes in Theta Chi nationally, and how the local chapter is doing. More advice and samples are available in the Chapter Operations Manual on Alumni Programming.

Have an Alumni Association: This is not a housing board or corporation. This is basically an Alumni Chapter whose purpose is to keep the bonds of brotherhood alive after graduation. They can schedule golf tournaments, banquets, football tailgaters, Friday luncheons, and even philanthropies.

Develop an Alumni Big Brother Program: This can be a valuable tool in bridging the gap between alumni and the chapter. If alumni in the area have the time to spend one day a month with a little brother -- it can have a tremendous impact on the new member's development.

Develop an Alumni Phone Tree: The chapter needs to keep personal contact with the alumni who are involved. This phone tree would be designed to supplement the newsletter. Personal calls to keep prominent alumni informed of recent developments can help keep their support. The worst scenario is when alumni hear important news from the chapter "second hand."

**FRIENDS OF THETA CHI:**

**Parents of chapter members and new members:**

Celebrate Parent's Day: Have a day where parents of the chapter can come to the chapter house, or campus, and meet the members of the chapter. This day should be designed to entertain families - not members. There should be no emphasis on alcohol. Have games, a couple of speeches, pictures, a nice meal, house tours, and some activities that get families meeting each other. This can be extremely effective for recruitment as parents can become involved in their son's fraternity.

Write letters to parents: Each parent of a new member or even a potential member should get a letter explaining the fraternity, its benefits and costs, and other information designed for them to support their son's decision. This letter can be written by the chapter, or an even better way is to have a letter be written by an involved parent of a member, explaining how the fraternity helped their son.

Develop Mothers'/Fathers' Club: This is a good way to keep parents informed and involved. This club can be a great resource in bringing extra resources and finances into the chapter. It also can help by sending members to conferences and conventions. Many chapters have combined parents and alumni in their programming by inviting everyone to Founders' Day.

Develop a parents' newsletter: You should develop a separate newsletter for parents, but if funds are short, you should send copies of the alumni newsletter to parents. A good parents' newsletter contains information on the chapter's accomplishments, university events, individual achievement in the chapter, and updates parents on dates when they are involved in the chapter. It can also provide information on rent/dues due dates.

### **Guests at the chapter house/events:**

Do not ignore strangers at your chapter: The worst thing a chapter can do is ignore an unidentified visitor. There is no reason to be shy - you are the host. If a person walks around for fifteen minutes before he is greeted, he/she will have a negative impression of the chapter. Any brother or pledge should be instructed to greet a guest AND introduce him/her to others. Do not greet them and leave them alone.

Give a tour of the house: It is a good touch to give first time visitors to your chapter a nice tour of the house. This is usually done in recruitment and should be done in most cases with guests. It can be to your advantage to have a rehearsed tour where some history of the chapter is introduced as well. This can be taught in new member education. The tour can conclude with the guest signing a registry.

Have a registry book: This helps them feel welcome. Have them sign in - as is often done at weddings. This helps in writing thank you letters or in expanding the list of people to send a newsletter.

Develop souvenirs: There are many Theta Chi mementos, which can be given to guests. This can include pens and pencils, coasters, clothing, or even a red carnation for female guests. The memento should remind the person of a unique quality of your chapter.

### **Business contacts:**

Send greeting cards: Developing a good relationship with your suppliers and business contacts can help ensure cooperation in the future. It is a good touch to send Christmas cards and other holiday items such as candy.

Develop a personal contact: When dealing with larger companies, it can be to your advantage to develop a personal relationship with a specific representative. This can help during times when something goes wrong. This is especially important in dealing with food suppliers.

Operate in a timely manner: Late payments, last minute requests, and a lack of communication can result in bad public relations. Companies have policies and procedures that, when thrown off, cause them trouble. This practice can affect a long-term relationship with a company where they may choose not to accept your business.

Avoid long-term contracts: Since your chapter officers serve terms of one year they should not enter into long-term contracts. Many contracts of this nature should be signed by the Alumni Corporation. Contracts such as composite pictures, recruitment supplies, and office supplies can be signed and renewed on an annual basis. The needs and operating levels of a chapter often change drastically over the course of two years..

Invite them to chapter events: Some chapters have invited long time business contacts to events such as Founders' Day and special dinners. Many of their contacts are university alumni or involved in the college.

This is a good opportunity to thank them for helping the fraternity and giving them a chance to meet the members of the chapter. Obviously, this is not done for all suppliers, but those who have stuck with you for awhile.

### **Employees of your chapter:**

Pay them on time: Remember, their livelihood depends on receiving their paychecks on time. It is important to establish written expectations with them; for example, all paychecks will be issued by the 5th and 20th of each month.

Study employee relations: There are many laws and practices that affect an employment situation. Time off, sick days, breaks, benefits, notices, and basic communication can affect the relationship of the employee with your chapter. Disgruntled employees can have a negative effect on a chapter's image by bringing a lawsuit. It is ideal to have the employee relationship handled by the alumni, if possible. If not, have a professor or an advisor help establish policies for a good relationship.

Personal contact: It is good to be friendly to your employees. Obviously, you do not want to lose them. Birthday cards, Christmas bonuses, and small surprises can help keep them around. Finding new employees, especially a cook or housemother, can be difficult.

### **THE GENERAL COMMUNITY:**

#### **Civic Leaders:**

Do community service: This is a good way to get the leaders of your community to take notice. Helping the less fortunate brings value to your organization. Many of the non-profit groups belong to the Chamber of Commerce, which has contact with city officials.

Join the local chamber of commerce: This can be a valuable tool in networking. If your chapter, preferably the IFC, joins they can easily obtain mention in city brochures, obtain projects, and become involved in civic activities. It is also a valuable tool for older members to network for future employment.

Become politically involved: Many chapters have had their chapter as a licensed polling place. Many members have also volunteered for service to candidates or political parties to help increase voter turnout. These opportunities usually bring with them substantial press coverage.

Invite city officials to chapter dinners as guest speakers: This is a great way to help improve the image of fraternities with public officials. It gives them an opportunity to see first hand the quality of our chapter members, their politeness and appearance. It also gives them an opportunity to aid in their development by presenting topics that concern the city and local government, which affect the school. This often can result in good press coverage.

Honor dedicated officials as honorary members or present achievement awards: Many city officials can move on to bigger and better offices. If the Fraternity can make them an honorary member and help in any campaign work, time, recognition, and money is often returned by the candidate. Who knows, maybe a Theta Chi could make it to the White House? This honor should be reserved for city officials who have

helped the fraternity in a specific way.

Cooperate with local law enforcement: By scheduling officers to give crime prevention seminars, workshops on community issues, and helping with neighborhood watch, the chapter can establish a good rapport with the police department. This helps improve their response time to chapter emergencies and gives them, and you, a contact person on both sides.

### **Neighbors:**

Sponsor a neighborhood watch: Many chapters are in residential neighborhoods, which isn't always popular with the neighbors. By becoming responsible in the neighborhood, you can prevent any bad relations, which might develop. A neighborhood watch program is useful because the members are usually up and about later at night than the neighbors. This helps as a deterrent to any crimes, which may occur.

Notify neighbors of any late events: This is common courtesy. If you are hosting a party where noise might persist beyond your property, give your neighbors proper notice, generally 72 hours in advance. Let them know the times so they can, if they chose, make alternate arrangements.

Have a block party: This is a good way to get to know your neighbors. You can sponsor games and activities along with a barbecue or lunch. Let them know they are welcome in your chapter house. Offer tours to help acquaint them with your property.

Do not litter: If the house makes the neighborhood look dingy or dirty, you will have bad public relations. Make sure you clean up, especially after parties. Also, the appearance of the yard and house plays a major part. Avoid boarded up windows, broken down cars, dirty lawns, and other unsightly features that detract from the neighborhood.

### **The Media:**

Co-sponsor philanthropy events: By having radio stations and newspapers do philanthropy with you, you can gain extra exposure in their medium.

Utilize press releases and public service announcements: These are the ways to communicate with the media. Send these out as outlined in this manual. It will increase the chances of being covered in the press.

Advertise: Placing advertisements contributes to the income of the paper. If your chapter ever has a good news story written on a philanthropy or accomplishment it will, in general, be more positive or in a more prominent position in the paper since you help "pay the bills."

### **High School Students/Parents:**

Participate in orientation: This is a good way to meet potential members before recruitment. It is also a way to impress parents by being polite and helpful. It is important for the fraternity system to be represented by its leaders to its future members.

Sponsor high school scholarships: Many chapters have given financial scholarships (\$50-\$250) for outstanding high school students with impressive leadership, scholarship, and extra-curricular involvement. This is good for exposure to parents and other high school students. It puts their first impression of a fraternity in a positive light.

Perform philanthropic projects with high school organizations: People who join clubs in high school are likely to join fraternities in college. By showing them the value, while they are in high school, you can start recruiting early without really seeming to recruit. Events such as neighborhood cleanup, highway cleanup, bike-a-thons, and others are a good way to meet young people.

### **The General Public:**

Perform community service and philanthropy: There are literally hundreds of different service projects chapters can perform. They can take form in two ways: raising money and giving time. This section will list many of the different projects that chapters have completed.

#### Fund raising:

- Auction fraternity member services
- Sponsor sports tournaments (3 on 3 basketball/volleyball, soccer...)
- Marathons, or teeter-totter (Have sponsors donate by the hour)
- Develop a calendar and sell advertising
- Closest to the pin golf contest
- Recycle, aluminum cans, papers, glass...
- DRY events where admission is charged
- Pancake breakfast
- Food sale
- Collect donations door to door
- Raffles or drawings
- Toy/clothes drive
- Bike/Walk/Jog-a-thon
- Car washes
- Yard sale of old items

#### Service:

- Sponsor and coach a little league team
- Adopt-a-grandparent, underprivileged child, or highway
- Haunted House at Halloween for underprivileged children
- Construction, yard work for charity groups or neighbors
- Easter Egg hunt
- Habitat for Humanity
- Donate blood, host a blood drive
- Aid in voter registration
- Host guest speakers, programs
- Host a picnic for a shelter

- Safe walk/ride program
- Help the homeless

## APPENDIX

### Women's Fraternity Founding Dates and Flowers

#### NATIONAL PANHELLENIC CONFERENCE

ALPHA CHI OMEGA:	Scarlet Carnation	October 15, 1885
ALPHA DELTA PI	Purple Violet	May 15, 1851
ALPHA EPSILON PHI	Lily-of-the-Valley	October 24, 1909
ALPHA GAMMA DELTA	Red and Buff Roses	May 30, 1904
ALPHA OMICRON PI	Jacqueminot Rose	January 2, 1897
ALPHA PHI	Forget-Me-Not & Lily-of-the-Valley	October 10, 1872
ALPHA SIGMA ALPHA	Narcissus and Aster	November 15, 1901
ALPHA SIGMA TAU	Yellow Rose	November 4, 1899
ALPHA XI DELTA	Pink Rose	April 17, 1893
CHI OMEGA	White Carnation	April 5, 1895
DELTA DELTA DELTA	Pansy	Thanksgiving Eve, 1888
DELTA GAMMA	Cream Rose	December, 1873
DELTA PHI EPSILON	Iris	March 17, 1917
DELTA ZETA	Pink Rose	October 24, 1902
GAMMA PHI BETA	Pink Carnation	November 11, 1874
KAPPA ALPHA THETA	Black and Gold Pansy	January 27, 1870
KAPPA DELTA	White Rose	October 23, 1897
KAPPA KAPPA GAMMA	Fleur-de-Lis	October 13, 1870
PHI MU	Rose Carnation	January 4, 1852
PHI SIGMA SIGMA	American Beauty Rose	November 26, 1913
PI BETA PHI	Wine Carnation	April 28, 1867
SIGMA DELTA TAU	Tea Rose	March 25, 1917
SIGMA KAPPA	Violet	November 9, 1874
SIGMA SIGMA SIGMA	Purple Violet	April 20, 1898
THETA PHI ALPHA	White Rose	August 30, 1912
ZETA TAU ALPHA	White Violet	October 15, 1898

#### NATIONAL PANHELLENIC COUNCIL

ALPHA KAPPA ALPHA	Tea Rose	January 16, 1908
DELTA SIGMA THETA	Violet	January 13, 1913
SIGMA GAMMA RHO	Tea Rose	November 12, 1922
ZETA PHI BETA	White Rose	January 16, 1920

Sample Letters:

CONGRATULATIONS TO CIVIC LEADERS:

Mr. John Doe  
123 City Street  
Town City, State  
12345

Dear Mr. Doe:

The Brothers of Theta Chi Fraternity congratulate you on your recent election as mayor of our fine city. If we can help your office in any way, please let us know. The men of Theta Chi Fraternity pride themselves on developing young leaders for our community. We welcome your involvement with our college and hopefully our chapter over the upcoming years.

Again, congratulations on your election and best of luck for your success.

Sincerely,

The Brothers of Theta Chi Fraternity

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CONGRATULATIONS TO PARENTS:

Mr. and Mrs. John Smith  
123 Oak Drive  
Town City, State  
12345

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Smith,

On behalf of the Brothers of Theta Chi Fraternity we would like to congratulate you on your son's acceptance to our university and our chapter. The fraternity experience is one where your son will continue to grow and develop. It will help make the transition from high school to college life a lot easier.

Our Fraternity is a family, and you are now a part of our family. You are welcome to visit the chapter at any time and take part in your son's experience. We have scheduled Parent's Day for February 15, 19XX at 12 noon. We will be sending more information shortly.

Thank you for supporting your son's decision to join a fraternity. We welcome any questions you may have.

Sincerely,

The Brothers of Theta Chi Fraternity

Mr. and Mrs. John Smith  
123 Oak Drive  
Town City, State  
12345

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Smith,

Congratulations to you and your family on your son making the Dean's List. The Brothers of Theta Chi Fraternity are proud of Mike and his hard work. He has definitely raised our chapter's reputation and standard as an academic fraternity.

He will be receiving an award from the chapter at our annual Scholarship Banquet. It will be held at the University Reception Room on May 20, 19XX at 7:00pm. You are invited to attend and share in this honor.

If you have any questions, please call Frederick Freeman, Parent Relations Chairman, at 555-1856.

Sincerely,

The Brothers of Theta Chi Fraternity

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LETTERS TO ALUMNI:

Mr. Arthur Chase  
1856 Norwich Dr.  
Anytown, State  
12345

Dear Brother Art,

Thank you for visiting the chapter during your recent business trip. The brothers enjoyed meeting you and sharing stories of brotherhood. Your donation was appreciated as well. All alumni donations go to our alumni fund, which supports the chapter alumni room and alumni events/newsletters.

We would like to take this opportunity to invite you to the chapter's next alumni event. We are having a barbecue before the homecoming football game vs. Rival Tech. This gathering is open to your entire family. More information will be sent to you shortly.

Feel free to call upon the brotherhood if you are in the area again. You are always welcome at the

chapter.

Fraternally,

The Brothers of Theta Chi Fraternity

Mr. Arthur Chase  
1856 Norwich Dr.  
Anytown, State  
12345

Dear Brother Art,

Congratulations on your recent election to the State Senate. The chapter is proud of your accomplishment.

It is always a pleasure to see Theta Chi members assume leadership roles in our society. The fraternity will continue to teach the ideals that help develop future leaders.

We wish you the best of luck in your new position. If the chapter can help you in any way during the upcoming months, do not hesitate to ask. Our Helping Hand is always extended to you.

Fraternally,

The Brothers of Theta Chi Fraternity

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LETTER TO NEIGHBORS

Mr. and Mrs. Joe Brown  
9876 Fraternity Street  
College Town, ST  
12345

Dear Brown Family,

On Saturday evening, April 10, Theta Chi Fraternity will be hosting a social event. The event will begin at 10:00pm and will end precisely at 1:00am. The event will host approximately 100 people. They will all be students and members of our University's Greek Community.

The chapter will be following the risk management guidelines that were given to you at the beginning of the semester. We will do our best to keep the noise level low. The grounds will be cleaned of all litter no later than 10:00am the next morning. If you have any problems that evening, or at any time, feel free to call our President, Frederick Freeman, immediately. His number is 555-1856.

Thank you again for your continued help and understanding.

Sincerely,

The Brothers of Theta Chi Fraternity