

Idea Board: Marketing Your Program



Introduction:

Many programs rely on word of mouth to inform prospective students about new classes. However, word of mouth is just one way that information about your citizenship classes can be spread. It is important to use a variety of methods to help advertise your program. It is also critical to remember that recruitment is an ongoing process. When starting up citizenship classes, you need to allow sufficient time to recruit enough students to meet your program's goals.

Fliers:

Design a flier with program information (in English and other languages spoken in your community) and post it in neighborhoods with heavy foot traffic near locations where you plan to hold classes. Here are some other suggestions for distributing or displaying your fliers:

1. Ask business owners who cater to non-English-speaking customers if they would post your fliers or place them in shopping bags.
2. Contact local school administrators about posting your fliers in their offices or having them distribute fliers in the students' take-home folder to parents.
3. Post fliers in places of worship, community centers, and libraries.
4. Ask local business owners if they would be willing to place fliers in paycheck envelopes or other employee correspondence to inform employees and their family members of your program.
5. Order or download **USCIS posters and outreach materials** promoting citizenship to display in your program office or in classrooms. These materials are available in English, Chinese, Korean, Spanish, Tagalog, and Vietnamese.

Presentations:

Short presentations in English (with an interpreter) or in languages commonly spoken in your target community can help promote your program.

1. Ask local schools if you can give a presentation at open houses to inform parents about your program. Consider presenting at K-12 school staff meetings where teachers could learn about your program and share that information with the parents of their students.
2. Contact places of worship and ask if you could make a presentation or place a notice in the newsletter or weekly announcements.
3. Contact ethnic newspapers to place an announcement about your program in languages used by their readers.

4. Contact radio stations and ask if you could place a public service announcement (PSA) for free to advertise your program.
5. Participate in community fairs and other events by hosting a booth where you can distribute information about your program.

Online:

Many prospective students may research information about citizenship classes online. While some learners may not be searching the Internet, their friends and relatives may share what they learn about your program.

1. Announce your citizenship classes in a prominent place on your website.
2. Consider adding **USCIS Widgets** on your website which will take users directly to the Citizenship Resource Center, the official USCIS website about citizenship.



3. Post your program information on electronic bulletin boards and community websites.

Banners:

While it may be an initial investment, consider purchasing a banner to be displayed outside your program or on a marquee, announcing citizenship classes offered in your program. You may want to create something generic, such as “Citizenship Classes Starting Soon – Register Now!” that can be displayed whenever you have new classes starting.

Referrals:

Work with other service organizations in your community, such as social services, food banks, and housing authorities, so that their staff can refer their clients to you. In some areas, there may be a community service directory where your program could be listed as offering citizenship classes.

Information Sessions:

Contact your local USCIS Community Relations Officer about holding a free information session at your location. The **USCIS Information Sessions** are listed on the USCIS Citizenship Resource Center website and they attract many participants around the country. An information session provides an excellent opportunity to announce your new program or showcase your existing citizenship program.

Word of Mouth:

The recommendation from a satisfied student is a great way to help recruit new students. Encourage current and former students to help with recruitment. Volunteers can also assist by spreading the word about your program to friends, colleagues, and neighbors.