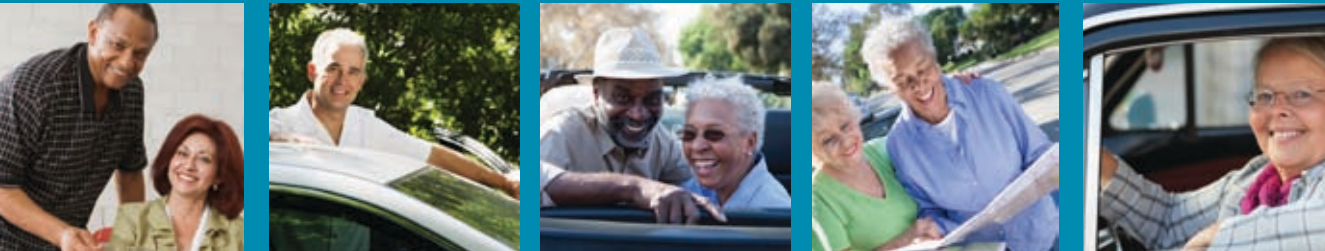


Promotions & Marketing Guide



**A Procedural Guide to Promoting
and Marketing the Program**

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Overview

The AARP Driver Safety Program offers a comprehensive nationally standardized training system and materials to its volunteers. The system includes training guides for all positions within the AARP Driver Safety Program volunteer structure. The goal of the comprehensive system is to provide quality training, consequently producing high quality and high performing volunteers.

The Marketing Specialist position is critical to the successful development and implementation of a state's overall promotion and marketing goals. The Marketing Specialist works with the State Coordinator and the State Leadership Team to implement and maintain promotions and marketing activities at both state and local levels. The Marketing Specialist should use information contained in this guide along with information in the *AARP Driver Safety Program Introduction & Policy Guide* and the *AARP Driver Safety Program Leadership Training & Policy Guide* as guides to the Marketing Specialist position. The official Marketing Specialist volunteer position description is located in the Appendix (**Appendix 1**).

General Marketing Specialist Duties Include:

- Designing and implementing a comprehensive promotions and marketing plan to address the needs of the state as determined by the State Coordinator and the overall State Leadership Team.
- Maintaining a close working relationship with the AARP leadership in his/her state, including: Senior State Director and Associate State Director, State Associate Director Communications, State Associate Director Community Outreach, where they exist, and other designated staff. Enlists help with program promotion and recruitment while keeping them informed of program activities. All media and communications are handled by the state office.
- Providing guidance and support to District Coordinators in implementing marketing and promotions in their area of the state.
- Supporting and identifying with the State Coordinator, Deputy State Coordinator, Zone Coordinator, District Coordinator and others regarding program needs in their state or area including:
 - Increasing program awareness
 - Increasing course participants
 - Increasing hosts
 - Increasing volunteers
 - Increasing recruitment of participants and volunteers that may bring diversity as it relates to race, gender, and age.

The Marketing Specialist maintains direct relationships with a tremendous number and variety of people. Good communication is essential to effective statewide promotions. Below is just a sampling of groups in which the Marketing Specialist should regularly communicate:

- **AARP Driver Safety Program State Leadership Team.** The Marketing Specialist plays an

integral role with the State Leadership Team. They are chiefly responsible for directing the state's marketing and promotions plan with the goal of recruiting participants, hosts, and volunteers. Within the leadership team, the Marketing Specialist interfaces most with their State Coordinator or Deputy State Coordinator as appropriate. The Marketing Specialist should be provided clear guidance on the state leadership team relationship during the initial conversations with the State Coordinator.

- **AARP State Office Communications and Community Outreach Staff.** Within each state office, there is a staff member responsible for overall state communications and another for community outreach. Along with your AARP Driver Safety Program State Coordinator, contact the designated AARP communications lead (Communication Representative, Associate State Director or designated liaison) to discuss all media and communications needs and to determine others with whom you should work with in your state (staff and volunteers) to achieve communications goals. It is critical that you have a dialogue with the state office communications staff to determine the optimal means for working with them when dealing with the media and communications. Your state office liaison can offer guidance as you develop your promotions and marketing plan, brainstorm on ways to cross-promote with other AARP programs and recruit participants, hosts, and volunteers.
- **AARP Driver Safety Program National Office.** Communication with the National Office is a key resource for the Marketing Specialist. The National Office provides a monthly Marketing Specialist conference call as a resource for the states to share effective practices. The National Office can provide assistance as necessary, such as assisting with the development of state promotions and marketing plans.
- **Other AARP Driver Safety Program Marketing Specialist.** Communicating with Marketing Specialist in other states provides valuable resource information, ideas and effective practices. A Marketing Specialist roster with contact information is provided quarterly to all Marketing Specialists listed in the AARP volunteer database.

Section 1: Getting Started as the Marketing Specialist

Your first step should be to meet with your State Coordinator to discuss the promotional and marketing priorities and goals for the state. Together assess the needs of your state. Are there specific areas in which the State Coordinator would like immediate attention (host recruitment, participant recruitment, volunteer recruitment, etc.)? What specifically is it that you want to accomplish in the next few months or over the next year? What is the prospective budget for marketing activities?

Begin developing a promotions and marketing work plan that will guide the State Coordinator (and other members of the leadership staff) and the Marketing Specialist toward common goals. Communication between all members of the State Leadership Team is vital and necessary to succeed.

Your plan will describe the promotional and marketing tools and tactics you will use to accomplish your goals. It is important to align your marketing and promotional plans with your goals for the year.

Steps to begin developing a Promotions and Marketing Work Plan:

- **Gather data from the State Coordinator and other state leadership designated by the State Coordinator:**
 - a. Participants
 - Current participant recruitment strategies
 - Current diversity profile for participants
 - Current diversity participant recruitment practices
 - b. Volunteers
 - Current deployment of AARP Driver Safety Program volunteers
 - Areas of the state needing new/additional volunteers
 - Current volunteer recruitment strategies
 - Current diversity profile for volunteers
 - Current diversity volunteer recruitment practices
 - c. Host
 - Current host locations
 - Current host recruitment strategies
- **Work with information provided by the National Office to assess the state by (check with your State Coordinator on the availability of this information. The State Coordinator can request information from the National Office):**
 - a. Location of courses/volunteers
 - b. Geographic areas where there are no courses
- **Plan a meeting with the State Coordinator to meet the AARP State Communications Director and AARP Driver Safety Program liaison.**
- **Meet with the AARP state office staff member assigned to the AARP Driver Safety Program to discuss their recruitment techniques and plans to:**
 - a. Collaborate with their efforts, if possible
 - b. Avoid recruiting at the same time, if problematic
 - c.. Request to use state Web letters, press releases, Public Service Announcements (PSAs), etc., as a means of promotion and recruitment
- **Use all of the information from the above activities and from other resources, design a 1-year work plan to include:**
 - a. Targeted areas of the state needing development (for host, participants and volunteers)
 - b. Targeted recruitment outreach plan for approaching groups, organizations and businesses (to recruit volunteers, participants, and/or hosts)
 - c. Follow-up plan to fully utilize national recruitment efforts [Insight volunteer and participant recruitments, VMIS (the volunteer database), AARP.org Online Community groups, Create The Good® and VolunteerMatch].

- d. An evaluation/tracking system for all participant, volunteer and host-site recruitment efforts
- **Develop a filing (paper and electronic) and tracking system for potential participants, hosts, and volunteers.**

Section 2: Working with Your AARP State Office

Each state office should have a point of contact to support and work with the AARP Driver Safety Program. In addition, each state office has a professional communications person who typically has very good contacts with the state press and other media outlets. This resource can be a wealth of help in getting your program publicized and promoted. Areas where your AARP state office can help you promote the AARP Driver Safety Program:

- AARP chapters and NRTA affiliated chapters can be a great resource for volunteers, host and participants.
- State offices can help identify or serve as a source for potential Marketing Specialist and leadership volunteer referrals.
- Some states regularly include the AARP Driver Safety Program on their state website and include publications for AARP Driver Safety Program. If your state does not list the AARP Driver Safety Program information on their state website, work with them to see if it can be included.

Go introduce yourself! This is the best first step. Call and make an appointment to discuss how you can work together. Your State Coordinator should be able to indicate with whom you should meet with first. Be sure to keep the State Coordinator informed of your activities with the state office to prevent double or conflicting requests.

AARP state offices have provided the AARP Driver Safety Program with assistance in a variety of ways including:

- Helping find new host sites and recruitment sources in an area, such as a large city to expand service particularly to diverse customers.
- Arranging for a recruitment letter for the Instructor position and/or leadership volunteers to AARP members from the AARP “Insight” database.
- Assistance in providing recruitment/promotion ads.
- Supplying exhibit and volunteer trinkets.
- Writing and sending out press releases for program publicity.
- Allowing office to be used for meetings, copying, and other such activities.
- Providing leads on exhibits and fairs in which the AARP Driver Safety Program may participate.

Communications

The AARP Driver Safety Program Communication Guidelines requires that the AARP state office must handle all media communications. The State Coordinator and Marketing Specialist must confer with their AARP state office Communications Director or designee regarding how to effectively work together. Possible communications and promotional related topics of discussion include:

- Announcements of the AARP Driver Safety Program courses (community calendars, event calendars, etc.).
- Volunteer announcements (new volunteers, volunteer recognition, etc.).
- Working with community papers and cable TV.
- Free print and radio Public Service Announcements (PSAs). Work with your state office Communications Director or designated liaison.
- Free advertising space in business, company and community newsletters, real estate and investment broker publications to advertise for volunteers.
- Building awareness by submitting safe driving articles.
- Inclusion of the AARP Driver Safety Program in state newsletters, Facebook pages, Twitter, www.aarp.org online community reference.
- Articles on new host relationships.

Section 3: Finding Potential Hosts and Volunteers

An often overlooked, but important first step in recruiting volunteers and hosts involves defining your objectives to clarify why you need volunteers, what you want them to do and in what locations you need volunteers and host. The clearer you are about these points at the outset, the easier it will be to develop a successful recruitment effort.

Be creative when you think about with whom to work at your district or state level. Always be on the lookout for statewide hosts. Any store, business, organization, nonprofit, or government entity may have something to offer!

The Better Business Bureau, Business Review Regional Book of Lists, and Chamber of Commerce membership rosters can provide comprehensive listings of potential targets in your region or state. Your librarian can direct you to business and organization reference materials and lists helpful in identifying targets and developing proposals. You can also use the Internet to research potential partners. For example, when you use www.google.com or www.yahoo.com, and type in “retirement communities,” a number of suggested websites are available for you to access. The following are examples of potential groups to work with in your area.

AARP (work with your AARP state office)

- Volunteers completing terms of service with other AARP assignments
- Former volunteers who may want get involved with another opportunity
- Members who have attended your events and picked up information on volunteering

- Prospects identified through joining or renewing membership
- AARP Chapters
- AARP NRTA affiliates

Corporate World

- Corporations
- Major employers in your state, region, and local communities
- Insurance agents, elder care lawyers, real estate companies
- Retail store managers, the market where you shop, businesses you patronize
- The manager of your bank branch and/or the community relations representative for the major banking institutions

Local Organizations and Community Groups

- Local partners of the National Association of TRIADS
- Local unions
- Credit unions
- Kiwanis, Rotary, Lion Clubs, Masons, the Junior League, or similar community service organizations
- Community foundations
- Churches and places of worship
- Community centers, particularly those sponsoring seniors programs
- State social agency retirees
- Retired educators and federal employees
- Retired professionals (e.g., clergy, health care workers, the military, police, firefighters, etc.)
- Human resource departments of companies (for both employees and recent retirees)
- Parent-Teacher Association (PTA)
- League of Women Voters
- United Way
- Volunteer centers
- Local labor unions and their retirees
- Professional organizations and societies
- Religious organization
- Ethnic and community groups

Government

- Schools, continuing education departments, community colleges, and universities
- State Department on Aging and other government agencies such as recreation, housing opportunities, commission offices, etc.

How to Contact Potential Volunteer Resources or Opportunity Groups:

- Visit the host location.
- Telephone a contact.
- Network—go to meetings, dinners, churches, synagogues, etc. If there is an event, often someone (possibly your AARP state office) is buying a table and has an open seat that needs to be filled. Be that person!
- Become a speaker at Kiwanis, Rotary and other service club meetings. Captivating this audience with the success and benefits of the AARP Driver Safety Program in your state may yield valuable resources.
- Connect with your AARP Associate State Director to discuss potential patterns and related program needs.

What Potential Volunteer Resources or Opportunity Groups Can Provide:

Volunteers

- Time of a staff person to assist with helping to organize or take registrations for a course.
- Many corporations, businesses and community groups operate community participation programs. Ask to include the AARP Driver Safety Program in their volunteer opportunities section.

Host Sites

- Locations where participants might frequent, such as stores, coffee shops, and banks
- Meeting rooms for the course
- Coffee and refreshments

Promotions and Marketing

- Free promotional space
- Promotions about the AARP Driver Safety Program benefits and volunteer opportunities
- Feature article space in company or organizational newsletter
- Postings at senior and community centers to promote an AARP Driver Safety Program course and to promote volunteer opportunities
- A link from the partner's website site to the AARP Driver Safety Program webpage, www.aarp.org/drive.
- Distribution of promotional materials on the AARP Driver Safety Program and volunteer opportunities at host sites and office locations

AARP Driver Safety Program Testimonials

Using participant, host, and volunteer testimonials in state and local promotional materials can be an effective way to put a human face on our messages and to promote the AARP Driver Safety Program. Below are sample testimonials. Consider going into your community to gather testimonials from course participants, host site contacts, and/or fellow volunteers.

Sample Participant Testimonials:

- “Thank you. This course is much appreciated by older drivers who need the program. The AARP Driver Safety Program Instructor was most cordial and helpful. He is a gem.”

- “Thanks again for the quick and timely response to my request for a course. It feels good to be able to help my grandparents out, so I wanted to be sure that I was able to get them enrolled quickly and do the right things for them.”

Sample Volunteer Testimonial:

- “I had to take the time to write you to thank you for allowing me to become an AARP Driver Safety Program volunteer. I was a bit nervous when I finished the training, but after hearing the gratitude expressed from my first class of participants, I knew I had chosen the right volunteer opportunity.”

Sample Host Site Testimonials:

- “This year we opened the community room in our grocery store to host an AARP Driver Safety Program course. Besides bringing in new customers, we found that our shoppers really appreciated the service you provide. Working with the volunteers has been a real pleasure—such dedication.”
- “Our library has housed many different programs, but the AARP Driver Safety Program is truly wonderful. Our patrons are happy for the savings they get from their insurance. In addition, the professionalism of your volunteers is exemplary. Thanks.”

Section 4: Promoting the AARP Driver Safety Program at the Local Level

Local level promotion and marketing can be included in the state promotions and marketing work plan or in a separate plan coordinated by a Zone or District Coordinator with the assistance of the Marketing Specialist. AARP Driver Safety Program hosting organizations should be a part of the local plan. Many of the state resources for the state promotions and marketing plan can be used for the local level plans.

Many times a hosting organization’s Director is very interested in furthering the public’s knowledge on older driver safety issues. As the host organization begins to recognize the positive effect of increasing community goodwill with the AARP Driver Safety Program course, they tend to become more positive and cooperative in promoting the course.

There are numerous ways to promote the AARP Driver Safety Program needs at the local level, utilizing promotional materials and brochures available through the AARP Fulfillment Center. This list is not intended to be exhaustive but rather provides some ideas for using the resources available in your community to publicize our program.

- Identify and work with the hosting organizations within each zone or district and the key people within those organizations to promote the AARP Driver Safety Program.
- Develop promotional and marketing strategies by zone (may vary by district).
- Using course evaluations, gather information as to how participants are learning about the course and upcoming courses. It is important to differentiate between REPEAT participants and NEW participants, because target marketing will differ. New participants need more descriptive information about the program and the advantages of taking the course.
- Post program posters, flyers and brochures locally in host sites and other heavily traveled public areas, including grocery stores/pharmacies, malls and other public buildings, as

well as in churches, senior centers, libraries, nursing homes and hospitals. Always receive proper authorization before posting or leaving material.

- Read your local newspapers for times, dates, and locations of county fairs, parades, civic celebrations, volunteer drives and social service fairs. These events are great opportunities to attend and pass out program information or ask to have an AARP Driver Safety Program table. If you do identify an opportunity or event, be sure to contact your state office to see if they have a table available already or could assist in getting one set-up for the AARP Driver Safety Program.
- Visit your local senior centers, nursing homes, hospitals and churches and ask them to place AARP Driver Safety Program articles in their newsletters and bulletins.
- Ask local host sites to place AARP Driver Safety Program information in their newsletters and bulletins.
- Contact your AARP Senior State Director or program liaison to explore how you can work together to publicize the AARP Driver Safety Program in conjunction with other AARP programs and services, and in AARP publications, such as *AARP The Magazine* and *AARP Bulletin*. Make sure program promotional materials are available in your AARP state office.
- Contact the local AARP chapter in your area and offer promotional materials and speakers as an opportunity to work together to publicize the AARP Driver Safety Program.
- Attend networking events for professionals serving diverse groups and seniors and ask to speak about the AARP Driver Safety Program.
- Contact local caregiving organizations and the Area Agency on Aging in your region to inform them about the AARP Driver Safety Program and get them to include our Web address and toll-free number on their website (see below).
- List AARP Driver Safety Program's toll-free number 1-888-AARPNOW (1-888-227-7669) and Web address (www.aarp.org/drive) on the Department of Motor Vehicles website, in local telephone directories, and in community-based service guides.

Section 5: Strategies for Outreach to Diverse Groups

It is important for the AARP Driver Safety Program to reach out to recruit diverse participants and volunteers. The following are suggestions for effective outreach to diverse communities:

Knowledge of the target community

A thorough knowledge of your target community is essential. Knowledge of the target community includes an assessment of community needs. Assess the need and interest of your target community before doing outreach activities or you will risk addressing an issue that is irrelevant to the target community. This could be done in different ways:

- Interview leaders, representatives and members of your target community.
- Discuss your project with the AARP staff office. Ask for state demographics collected by the state office.

Recruiting diverse volunteers and participants

The following will provide you with suggestions for recruiting diverse volunteers and participants. As you review, note the things that you are now doing and pat yourself on the back. Next, check things that you would like to begin doing and make plans to get started!

Getting Started

Ask these questions – What group already exists in our volunteer base? Who is missing? What are the current volunteer position vacancies? Are there areas in the state where demographics show large concentrations of underrepresented groups within the AARP Driver Safety Program course participants?

Tips to Remember

Once you have a clear idea of the volunteers that you want to recruit and the areas where no host locations may cause a lack of diverse participants, it is time to reach out and make a connection with organizations and individuals who can help you identify potential volunteers and participants.

- A good place to begin is with those who have been successful. Talk with your AARP Senior State Director and State President, as well as state volunteer leaders for recruiting suggestions.
- Contact your local United Way for more information about organizations that serve minority communities.
- Check your phone book for the local branch of the NAACP, Urban League, National Council on Hispanic Aging, National Indian Council on Aging and other national organizations, as well as churches serving minority communities.
- Check your newspaper for upcoming activities in minority communities where AARP might give out information.
- Contact sources such as a Chamber of Commerce, Minority Business newspapers, Minority Professional Organizations, as well as other professional groups. These organizations may help you reach diverse individuals who are over 50 and are still working, including “boomers.”
- Check with the Alumni Associations of local colleges, especially Historically Black Colleges and Universities—another source with a good mix of age, gender and diversity.
- The Internet may assist you as you prepare a list of sources to contact, providing information such as leadership names, addresses, and phone numbers.

Reaching Out

- Once a list of sources is assembled, create a plan for outreach. Work with organizations that are interested in AARP and are willing to partner with you to make contacts in the community. Use the resources of AARP such as staff, other volunteers, and appropriate materials to help with outreach.
- Contact both community leaders or boards of directors and offer to give a presentation on AARP and its benefits at a community or board meeting. Try this with “grassroots” groups and more formal organizations, such as the Urban League or professional minority organizations. Hand out materials on volunteer opportunities with an

explanation of the training and support that a volunteer will receive.

- Arrange for a booth or information table at community activities, such as health fairs, that serve your target populations. Ask partner organizations to help find community members who will assist. Think about doing this in local malls and shopping centers.
- Contact local churches and other religious institutions and offer to give a presentation at social events or coffee hours after services.
- Work with your state office communications staff to use AARP's strategies for publicity by placing PSAs on minority-owned radio stations and submitting articles to minority-owned publications and the newsletters of organizations with whom you are working.

SUGGESTED TIPS TO BUILD TRUST

- Find a respected member of the community to partner with to help recruit.
- Choose a location for a meeting at the group's comfort level.
- Do not overwhelm at the beginning with AARP Driver Safety Program information (save for later). Build on increasing awareness of older driver safety versus just the program.
- Learn; know as much as you can, do your homework.
- Be genuine.
- Listen instead of talking.

Section 6: Lead Follow-Up

It is critically important to immediately contact anyone expressing an interest in volunteering, hosting or participating with the AARP Driver Safety Program.

Participant and Host Follow-up

Potential participants and hosts lose interest if too much time elapses. Forward the participant or host lead to the appropriate AARP Driver Safety Program leadership volunteer in the state for a follow-up contact, as appropriate. Be sure to contact that volunteer within a week to find out the outcome.

Volunteer Follow-up

Potential volunteers lose interest if there is too much time between their request for information on volunteering and a follow-up by the AARP Driver Safety Program. Preferably, initial contact will be by phone and include:

- An explanation of the AARP Driver Safety Program.
- An explanation of the volunteer positions available.
- A conversation to determine if the person is interested in the program and position. If there is not a match, mention other AARP opportunities and ask if you may pass their name and contact information on to the state office.
- Send the individual an AARP Driver Safety Program position description and application and a self-addressed stamped envelope. Or you can email these items to them.
- When a completed application is returned, let the person know you received it and explain the next steps.

- Forward the application to the appropriate AARP Driver Safety Program leadership volunteer in the state for a follow-up interview and appointment, if appropriate. Contact that volunteer within a week to find out the outcome.

Section 7: Effective Practices

The Effective Practices listed below are good ideas and successful strategies that have been utilized by AARP Driver Safety Program volunteers. They offer good ideas, suggestions and proven practices that can be easily adapted to other locales. The purpose of our effective practice sharing is to encourage AARP Driver Safety Program teams across the country to hear how other states are achieving a greater level of program awareness and participation. The following are just a few approaches our states are instituting to support program awareness, volunteer recruitment, attracting new hosts, program management and working with the AARP state offices.

Additional Effective Practices can be found at www.aarpvolunteers.com.

Attracting Course Participants

- Have a monthly calendar of all AARP Driver Safety Program courses available in your state for the upcoming month. Telephone Coordinators and Instructors can use the calendar when talking with prospective participants to locate available course locations. Georgia provides their list of courses in their monthly volunteer correspondence. The newsletter is accessible to all Georgia AARP Driver Safety Program volunteers.
- As you work your local exhibit booth, stand in front of your table and ask, “Are you a good driver?” Almost no one can resist the temptation to respond. The result is a good conversation and an opportunity to answer questions and refer people to the AARP Driver Safety Program course.

Raising Program Awareness

- Collaborating with other AARP programs can increase awareness of the AARP Driver Safety Program. Montana Driver Safety Program, and Montana Tax-Aide begin a partnership in September 2006. AARP Tax-Aide hands each of their tax clients an AARP Driver Safety Program marketing flyer during tax season and says a few words about the program. The AARP Driver Safety Program Instructors will provide the course participants an AARP Tax-Aide marketing flyer during the year and say a few words about the program.
- Use the envelope-size AARP Driver Safety Program brochure, or Tell a Friend cards, with your name and number on the back, and ask a medical supply store, insurance agency, pharmacy, etc., to include your material in their monthly statements.

Recruiting New Program Host

- Community approach to an AARP Driver Safety Program course was illustrated when the River Bend, North Carolina Police Department sponsored an AARP Driver Safety Program course with refreshments provided by the River Town Belles, members of the Red Hat Society. Course Instructors were members of the New Bern and River Bend Police Departments.
- In Picayune, Mississippi, an Instructor was at his chiropractor and mentioned his

involvement with the AARP Driver Safety Program. The doctor was interested, so the Instructor asked him to become a host location. The chiropractor agreed and volunteered to give each participant a free chiropractic exam. They had 26 participants in the class.

- This same Instructor in Picayune, Mississippi, was having his car serviced and asked the manager if he would host an AARP Driver Safety Program course. He said he would and agreed to give each participant a free oil change.
- In Biloxi, Mississippi, an Instructor was checking out cars at a new dealership. While in conversation with the sales manager, the Instructor explained, he was an Instructor for the AARP Driver Safety Program. The manager expressed interest in hosting a course. Following the course, the general manager made two mechanics available to answer any questions.

There are other unusual and odd host relationships out there. Hosts are out there and willing to host the AARP Driver Safety Program course, if the Instructors asks.

Recruiting Volunteers

- Some Instructors ask participants to write their name on both sides of the name tent card—one side for the Instructor, one side for the participant sitting on either side of them. An optional use for name tent cards is to recruit new Instructors for the program. On the blank side of the card, print the following:

I am interested in becoming an AARP Driver Safety Program Instructor

Yes ___ Maybe ___ No ___

Someone who would make a good Instructor is

Name _____

Program Management

- The Connecticut Driver Safety Program developed a “promo” group to work on Connecticut marketing and promotions. The group consists of AARP Driver Safety Program volunteers and AARP Connecticut state office staff. The promo group meets monthly to discuss marketing strategy, issues, and upcoming events. Outcomes from the group include the development of a state promotional flyer. The state promotional flyer can be posted anywhere, especially with program host.

Marketing Specialist

What are some of the things a Marketing Specialist does? Following are tips from just one Marketing Specialist. Some of these ideas may work in your state.

- Make sure to always cc (copy) the appropriate District and Zone Coordinators on any marketing or promotions you do in their areas. It is a good idea to contact them before you make the contacts to make sure they have not already done that.
- Contact the agencies/councils on aging—they will provide a great network for you.
- Make sure to put both the local District Coordinator and your Marketing Specialist contact information on letters of introduction and on the back of the host brochure.
- Work closely with the Zone Coordinator and District Coordinators. Some areas cannot

handle more hosts until they get more Instructors, so in those areas, you will be helping the District Coordinator recruit Instructors first. The local organizations like the agencies/councils on aging may have some good ideas on where you might find people interested in becoming Instructors. Also, build a good relationship with the Retired Teachers Association, giving talks at area meetings about our programs, and asking for volunteers.

- Some volunteers find it easier to engage hosts than participants. Therefore we focus on bringing in hosts that are enthusiastic about pursuing participants on their own; for example, one Instructor recently brought in a host that has eight different “senior housing” facilities throughout the state. First, the Instructor coordinated a class at the facility within his district, and the host advertised and brought 39 participants to the class. The host is so excited about doing this; they now have included five facilities in four different districts. This host also provides breakfast and lunch! A home run!
- The Visiting Nurses Association and the Visiting Nurses Services have proven good hosts in a number of different towns.
- This year, we started having leadership/marketing meetings every month or so. These can be done by conference call, including the Chief Trainer, State Coordinator, all Zone Coordinators, and the Marketing Specialist. Discussions include information from the National Office, upcoming events, what’s going on in each zone, any training coming up, marketing needs/efforts in various parts of the state (and statewide), etc. The meetings have proven VERY useful for all leadership volunteers.
- Keep an event schedule. The Marketing Specialist keeps it updated and distributes to the leadership team. The Marketing Specialist also makes sure the AARP state office has current copies of the AARP Driver Safety Program event schedule. We often coordinate participation at a senior health fair or some other event with the state office and either have tables next to each other or share a table (or often the AARP Driver Safety Program has some AARP materials on the AARP Driver Safety Program table). Right before a fair or other event, the state office is contacted to coordinate.
- At health fairs and other events, we talk with the hosting organization explaining that we are a nonprofit with no or limited funds for participation fees, but will be more than happy to donate a \$25 gift certificate for a raffle. That usually satisfies them.
- One way to get hosts on the bandwagon is through recognition. We encourage District Coordinators and Instructors to “recognize” them with a certificate and formal presentation—sometimes during a course. We also work with the AARP state office to invite the local paper to the presentation and provide them with a nice write-up about the person being presented and the facility and the program. They usually do a nice write-up and often include a picture. If they do not show up, then we work with the state office to send the local paper(s) a write-up and photo.
- Maps of the state are generated with 2000 census information added to make it clear to the District Coordinators what the potential is in their areas.
- The hardest part is keeping organized and keeping up with all that is going on throughout the state! Every district’s needs are different— some areas need your help more, some not at all.
- The duties of the Marketing Specialist position are never the same from one week to the next! However, it is fun and challenging! GOOD LUCK!

Section 8: AARP Driver Safety Program Exhibiting Guidance and Tips

Exhibiting at conferences, fairs, open houses or community events can provide terrific opportunities to promote the AARP Driver Safety Program in your state or local area. However, due to the time commitment and cost of exhibiting at events, selecting and properly preparing for your event is vital. These steps are designed to help you determine how to find the best event for your objectives and how to get the best return on investment for your exhibiting activities.

Before the Event

Step One: Identify Your Marketing and Promotional Objectives

When thinking about exhibiting or attending an event, fair, or conference, it is important to consider why you should attend and what the anticipated outcome will be. Ask yourself: “What is the purpose of attending this event?” and “what specifically will I get out of attending?” While we are always looking to increase participants, hosts, and volunteers, you should have an established focus and goals for each event. Below are some potential objectives for attending/exhibiting at an event:

- Gain visibility and establish awareness of AARP and the AARP Driver Safety Program.
- Educate potential hosts and volunteers about the AARP Driver Safety Program.
- Gather potential participant leads.
- Gather potential volunteer leads.
- Gather potential host leads.
- Establish a presence in the community.

Often you will have more than one reason or opportunity to attend/exhibit at an event—the more reasons the better! Some secondary objectives to attending/exhibiting an event or conference could be to create strategic alliances, find new promotional opportunities, or find new hosts.

Step Two: Target the Right Event to Meet Your Objectives

Once you know what you want in an event (the main objective you want to achieve), your focus should be on ensuring that the event at which you choose to attend/exhibit is in line with your anticipated objective. Remember, just as important as knowing what you want to get out of an event is knowing that you have targeted the right event and audience. Some questions to ask yourself are:

- Does your target market attend this event?
- How many people are expected to attend the event?
- Do you have adequate volunteers in the area for staffing?

Step Three: Set Realistic and Measurable Goals and Targets

Now that you know whether or not to attend/exhibit and what you want out of it, the next step is to identify and measure how successful the event will be towards meeting those goals. Express your objectives in specific, measurable, realistic and time-bound terms. Do your homework to calculate realistic goals. Create an evaluation form during the planning stage (you are more objective before the event than after the exhibit) to determine how well you

performed in relation to your goals. Make the form easy for booth volunteers to use and enter comments.

Some sample goals metrics to use to measuring the success of an event:

- Get 10 leads (potential participants) for an upcoming AARP Driver Safety Program course and follow up with leads within 10 days after the exhibit.
- Get an invitation to speak at two community meetings or events.
- Get three leads for potential new host and follow up within 5 days.

In addition to just setting the goal, remember to include a timeline for follow-up/completion.

Step Four: Review Event Costs Against Your Budget

There are several expenses to consider when attending/exhibiting at an event. Make sure that you account for these expenses when planning to exhibit at an event, and ensure that you have money in your budget to cover all costs. Below are some potential costs associated with exhibiting at events:

- Booth fee (free, nonprofit rate, provided by state office/National Office, etc.).
- Supplies for exhibiting (AARP Driver Safety Program banners, brochures, etc.).
- Printing, if needed.
- Prizes and giveaways (coordinate giveaways with your State Coordinator and the National Office).
- Box handling fees.
- Travel (volunteer travel and meals).
- Equipment (furniture, monitor, electrical outlets, etc.)

Step Five: Plan Out Your Booth Layout and Design

It is important that your booth look visually appealing to your potential audience. Therefore, you should spend some time laying out how the AARP Driver Safety Program booth should look, including what materials and equipment you will include. Do not forget to get the exhibition rules, policies and schedule (when you can set-up and take down, exhibit hours, number of volunteers allowed). Items to consider:

- Placement of brochures, banners, pictures, and equipment.
- Booth location and traffic pattern.
- Booth amenities (rug, curtains, skirting, tables, waste bins, and electrical outlets).

The most important thing to keep in mind: people have 2 or 3 seconds when they pass in front of your area to decide if they will stop, engage, and talk with you. Within that timeframe, they should be able to identify who you are, what your specific service/purpose is, and what is in it for them. Always keep that in mind when designing your booth or exhibit area.

Step Six: Properly Staff Your Event and Set a Realistic Schedule

When considering staff for your event, you should work with volunteers ahead of time to make sure they understand the objectives of exhibiting and what your measurable goals and expectations are. When identifying whom to have attend an event, you should consider the following:

- The staff should be knowledgeable on AARP and the AARP Driver Safety Program.
- The staff should have strong presentation skills and a positive attitude.

Once you have identified who will be attending the event, you should work to create a realistic staffing schedule so that the booth has proper staff coverage at all times. Some things to consider:

- Staffing a booth is demanding work. Do not expect volunteers to do it for hours at a time without a break.
- Ensure you will have at least two people at the booth at any time.
- Try to avoid leaving the booth unattended. You are much more likely to hit your goals by personally talking to people at the booth than leaving it unattended.

At the Event

Once you have run through all of the various pre-event planning steps, you are ready to attend the event and meet your marketing objectives! Below are some helpful steps in ensuring the execution of your event is flawless and meets your expectations and goals.

Step One: Allow Ample Time for Set-Up

Once you arrive at the event, the set-up can often feel hectic and rushed. Here are some tips for a smooth and stress-free exhibit booth set up:

- Have the booth specifications in writing along with a simple drawing of the layout.
- Bring a survival kit with things you may need for set-up and operation: a stapler, pins, tape (masking, duct, scotch, double-sided), scissors, pens, extension cords, and the event contact person information.
- If you sent booth materials to the event beforehand, find out where your boxes or materials are being stored for easy retrieval.

Step Two: Establish Your Presence at the Booth and Event

Just as important as setting-up and planning the booth space is the staffing and engagement level at the booth itself. Below are some recommendations to ensure you keep people (and yourselves) engaged at the event:

- Staffing a booth has many similarities to an elevator speech. Keep explanations of the program and its benefits simple.
- Listen to the attendees. Use the themes of constant questions and comments received from the attendees to improve your elevator speech.
- Get something from each visitor—a card, name, company, or comment.
- Use your chairs sparsely. If you have chairs, have one volunteer sit occasionally while the other stands or use the chairs to let your visitors sit.
- During down times, one volunteer should browse and network while the other staffs the booth.
- Do not lean back and just sit during down times. A sitting exhibitor projects a tired message. Of course, there are circumstances when great volunteers must sit!
- Determine how to quickly find out whether an attendee qualifies for our service and how

to graciously move on if they do not. Looking at an attendee does not tell you if they are a qualifier. A young male may be an excellent qualifier as a referral or decision maker for his parent or grandparent. A young female could easily be a decision maker for a potential host.

- Do not spend too long with each attendee—get their contact details and follow up after the show—remember you are at the exhibit to meet as many people as possible, not to get one participant and let the rest of the prospects walk by while you are busy.

Step Three: Coordinate and Manage Giveaways

If you are using giveaways at an event, remember to use them wisely to help you achieve your goals:

- Give out your giveaways only after you get something in return. It lessens the value (and increases the costs) to indiscriminately give away your freebies to anyone walking by.
- Just passing out giveaways to bring people to the area without engaging in a conversation usually provides no return on your investment.
- People love to enter drawings for prizes. Consider having one large prize versus small giveaways. This allows you to collect leads for participants, host and/or volunteers. Remember to use your leads properly and follow up in a timely manner.

Step Four: Measure the Success of the Event

As was discussed earlier, it is now time to quantify and measure the return of exhibiting against your established objectives. Remember, a successful booth pays for itself with leads and awareness. Some examples of how to measure the success of an event:

- Did I meet the goals I set out to achieve (e.g., get 10 participant leads, 3 host leads)?
- Calculate the number of potential participant, volunteer, or host leads acquired.
- Calculate the ratio of potential leads versus the total number of people who came to the booth (total traffic). If the number of leads is very low relative to the total number of people who came to your booth, you may want to consider if the event is for the right audience, etc.
- Once you follow up on leads for participants, hosts or volunteers, track the number of true “conversions” (i.e., how many of those leads actually took the course, became a volunteer or a host facility). Calculating this percentage/ratio versus your initial lead count is also a great metric to use.

Step Five: Follow Up on Leads, Offers to Speak or Other Promises

At events, it can be so hectic that it is often easy to forget to follow up on promises, next steps, or leads. It is important to follow up and take time to evaluate the success of your event from a measurable and quality standpoint. Here are some ideas to help ensure that you follow up on promises made and evaluate event performance:

- Keep a notebook at the exhibit booth where volunteers can write down any action items or follow-ups upon returning home.
- Remember to keep a detailed log of contact information for potential participants, volunteers, or hosts.
- Follow up with promises and leads within 5 days to make sure they stay engaged. After

several days, those leads may forget about your program and lose interest. Strike while the iron is hot!

- Evaluate the experience using the form you developed prior to the event. Make notes for improvements.

Remember, sometimes it may be best to be an attendee, not an exhibitor. If the budget is tight, you may not want to spend money on exhibits. Capitalize on the event show by being a speaker or a panel expert. This will add credibility to the AARP Driver Safety Program and attract potential leads while not costing anything.

The secret to success: comfortable shoes and plenty of bottled water.

Stay relaxed, refreshed and hydrated! In addition, do not forget to smile and have a great time!

Section 9: Resources

Additional AARP Driver Safety Program resources to use in partnership with this guide:

- *AARP Driver Safety Program Introduction & Policy Guide* - A must read to learn about the AARP Driver Safety Program before you begin marketing the program. The guide is a cornerstone of the training system and contains information AARP and AARP Driver Safety Program history, operations, and procedures. It also includes additional promotions and host recruitment information.
- Host Information Packet – A stand-alone host packet of information to leave with a host location after the initial meeting.
- A PowerPoint template of a stock speaker presentation is available on VolunteerNet in the Forms and Template section. The template should be used to provide a professional appealing AARP Driver Safety Program presentation.
- Most of the materials in the comprehensive system reside in the Volunteer Portal. The AARP Volunteer Portal is a critical resource for AARP Driver Safety Program volunteers. It is a website that incorporates self-service functions and AARP Driver Safety Program information (manuals, forms, position descriptions, etc.) and tools needed to carry out your assigned volunteer position. The website is updated periodically with changes that impact the responsibilities of all AARP Driver Safety Program volunteers. To access this important resource, visit www.aarpvolunteers.com. This is an important communications resource for you, so we encourage you to visit the site regularly.

Let us know about your success!! Notify the AARP Driver Safety Program National Office by sending an email to drive@aarp.org.

Appendix 1: Marketing Specialist Position Description

Volunteer Marketing Specialist Position Description

AARP Driver Safety Program

The AARP Driver Safety Program is the nation's first and largest driver safety course designed especially for drivers age 50 and older to help people live more independently as they age. Since its inception in 1979, the program has helped millions of drivers stay safe. It covers defensive driving techniques, rules of the road, and normal changes in vision, hearing, and reaction time—including practical ways to compensate for these changes. In many states, course participants may be eligible for an auto insurance discount. The course is open to AARP members and non-members of all ages and is available in a classroom or online setting.

Position Function

A Volunteer Marketing Specialist has program marketing responsibility as determined by the volunteer State Coordinator. This includes identification and development of potential statewide hosts, identification of publicity/promotion opportunities, coordination of program exhibits at statewide events, and collaboration with AARP state office staff and state-sponsored volunteers on program promotion activities.

Responsibilities

- Provides guidance and counsel to the volunteer State Coordinator on matters of statewide marketing opportunities and general program sponsorship.
- Identifies potential statewide hosts including associations, corporations, social service agencies and organizations for the aging.
- Initiates development of statewide sponsorship with those groups indicating interest.
- Coordinates exhibiting of program materials and volunteer staffing of exhibit at statewide meetings of program hosts or potential hosts.
- Collaborates with AARP state office staff and state-sponsored volunteers to enhance sponsorship promotion.
- Serves as a consultant on marketing and sponsorship to state AARP Driver Safety Program volunteer leadership.
- Actively seeks and involves diverse populations in program activities.
- Promotes AARP's priorities and goals.

Qualifications

- Background in sales and marketing.
- Commitment to the goals and priorities of AARP Driver Safety Program.
- Ability to understand and work well with diverse populations.

Term of Service and Length of Service

Two (2) years with option by supervisor to renew as appropriate.



Training Required

- Orientation to AARP Driver Safety Program
- Program skills training

Travel Required

National, regional, state and local travel as necessary.

Appointed By

The AARP Driver Safety Program Volunteer State Coordinator

Supervisor

The AARP Driver Safety Program Volunteer State Coordinator

Progress Review

The volunteer Marketing Specialist's progress will be monitored on an ongoing basis. As appropriate, the Marketing Specialist and his or her supervisor will establish a work plan to serve as the basis for the progress review.

Available Resources

AARP will provide volunteer travel accident insurance and commercial general liability insurance for the instructor while he or she is performing volunteer responsibilities. Expenses will be reimbursed in accordance with existing AARP and AARP Driver Safety Program volunteer policies.

It is the policy of the Association that all AARP volunteers will receive equal opportunity and treatment throughout recruitment, appointment, training, and service. There will be no discrimination based on age, economic status, sex, national or ethnic origin, physical or mental abilities, race, sexual orientation, gender identity or religion.

(Revised 5/18/10)



Appendix 2: Targeted Recruitment Checklist

As a summary to the Marketing Specialist information, following is a summary checklist for the recruitment part of your position.

Consult with your State Coordinator to identify needs. This will help you identify where you need to recruit.

Identify and research your potential recruitment targets

- Visit your local library to consult area business lists and descriptions.
- Be sure also to use the Internet for additional research.
- Consult business and organization listings, Chamber of Commerce membership directory.
- Identify colleagues, friends, business contacts.
- Consult with your AARP Senior State Director (or designated liaison) for “leads.”
- Prioritize a list of potential recruitment partners.
- Research potential recruitment partners to understand their business environment.
- Research the proper contacts, their title, address, and contact information.
- Develop background notes on the partner’s business environment.



AARP Driver Safety Program

601 E Street, NW

Washington, DC 20049

1-888-AARP-NOW (1-888-227-7669)

www.aarp.org/drive

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