



Putting posters up in shops

Shopkeepers play a vital role in the social fabric of a community. They are not just business owners but also community connectors who can help organisers reach and engage with a diverse range of residents. Shopkeepers are crucial network connections for community organisers for several key reasons:

1. **Central Gathering Point:** Shops are often central points where community members gather regularly. This makes shopkeepers natural hubs of social interaction and information exchange.
2. **Local Knowledge:** Shopkeepers have a deep understanding of the local community. They know the residents, their needs, preferences, and challenges. This knowledge is invaluable for organisers trying to understand and address community issues effectively.
3. **Trust and Familiarity:** People tend to trust their local shopkeepers. This trust and familiarity can be leveraged by organizers to build rapport and credibility within the community.
4. **Information Dissemination:** Shopkeepers can disseminate information quickly and effectively. Whether it's about community events, initiatives, or important news, they can help spread the word among residents.
5. **Support for Initiatives:** Shopkeepers, particularly those with a stake in community well-being, are often willing to support local initiatives. This can range from providing space for meetings to promoting community activities in their shops.

For the above reasons, interactions with shopkeepers are a good starting point for promoting an event in the community. Here's an initial method that you can tailor:

1. Enter the shop and buy something (doesn't have to be big - maybe a juice carton or chewing gum).
2. After you've paid for the item, ask the shopkeeper if you can put up a poster in the shop. Show them a small flyer you have ready in your pocket. Tell them it's for a community event - "Don't worry, nothing dodgy!"
8 out of 10 times they will say yes.
3. Put up a poster or two in a highly visible place.
4. Go back to the shopkeeper and ask "Can I ask you a few questions about your experiences of living in the area? Basically, we're trying to have 100 conversations with members of the community to understand the key things that worry us".
If they're not busy, they will say yes 8 out of 10 times.
5. Ask them a few opening questions:

- a. "How long have you owned this shop?"
- b. "How long have you lived in the area?"
6. Let the conversation evolve organically. Try to get a sense of...
 - a. The key issues in the community.
 - b. When the issues started.
 - c. The main actors (e.g. council, charities, police, etc.)
 - d. What's already being done.
 - e. What's working or not.
7. Let the conversation draw to a natural close. Aim to speak for around 5 minutes. Pull out your pen and paper and get yourself ready to write - then ask for their contact details:
 - a. "I've really enjoyed our chat, it's been a pleasure. Can I just whack your details on here so I can send you an invitation for the event? What's your email?"
If you've had a 5-minute chat and they've spoken most of the time, they will say yes 8 out of 10 times.

Return a week before the event...

8. Greet the shopkeeper again and ask them how they're doing.
9. Ask if you can put some flyers on their counter.

What to bring:

- Bluetac
- Posters (A3)
- Flyers (A5)
- Pen

Important Notes

- Make sure you go out of peak hours (e.g. Weekday 10am).
- Remember the 80:20 rule - they should be speaking 80% of the time and you only 20%.
- Watch this video for tips on how to listen

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yOKCq76K-X0&t=661s&ab_channel=UrbanConfessional