

MASCOT DESIGN CONTEST

by Dave Weiss

Well you have your A.M.O.K. ministry started. Now what you need is an image that will separate your ministry from all the other stuff being offered out there, an image that will grab attention, an image that will really capture the spirit of what you are trying to accomplish. You could go to an agency and have them create something for you, but hey, you're a group of artistic people why not do it yourself? Have a mascot design contest. Open it up to anyone that wants to participate.

Here's how to do it:

Start off with a few ground rules, this will make it easier to reproduce the winning entry. The image must fit onto an 8.5" by 11" piece of paper with a border of one half inch all the way around the sides. (This will allow for scanning on virtually any desk top scanner.) The image must be presented in two formats: black and white line art (no color, no shading) and full color. This is important because sometimes the mascot will need to be reproduced in black and white, such as images you photocopy, as well as letterhead, business cards and envelopes, newspaper ads, etc. where four color printing is cost prohibitive. On the other hand, on the web you will want color images, but even there depending on the software and applications, you may need to start with the line art and add the color in the program. Set a deadline for when the mascot designs must be turned in.

Guidelines for the character are as follows:

- The character should reflect the character of the group.

- The character should be clean and reflect a positive image on a Christian organization.

- The character should appear non-violent.

- The character should lend itself to many applications.

- The character must reflect the whole group, not just certain disciplines.

Judging:

Once the characters have all been turned it is time to pick which one will be your group's mascot. I recommend that you do it this way. Be certain that no one's name appears on the front of any of the designs and number each entry. Post them all on a

wall side by side, with the color image and the black and white image right next to each other. Explain to all the members of the purpose of needing both black and white and color. Then explain the criteria for the character. Give each member of the group a slip of paper and have them write the number of the best design. The design receiving the most votes is the winner. Save the other designs for other applications.

OK I have a mascot, now what?:

Scan the mascot and reproduce him on everything you distribute for one thing. Add him to your letterhead, envelopes, mailing labels, business cards, etc. Place your mascot on every ad you place and on every promotional flyer you mail out or post. Have a transparency made up of him. Put him on tshirts for your group. Reproduce full color jpg and gif files for your web site and any multimedia presentations.



Have the winning artist create several poses of the character to be used in your news letter. There are really no limits to how many applications your mascot can have. The key on using a mascot is branding.

You never hear about Kelloggs Frosted Flakes without seeing Tony the Tiger. You rarely hear about Disney without seeing Mickey Mouse. You get the idea. If you saturate your area with images of your mascot, eventually as soon as people see the mascot on a flyer posted across the room, they will come and check it out, especially if your group has a reputation for quality. If your mascot is interesting enough, it will attract the attention of people seeking something to do.

A few other things you can do with your mascot are:

- Create a life size cut out of your mascot to decorate your room, or add him to a mural.
- Create a cutout out of a more durable material like plywood and exterior paints and use it as a sign outside your meeting facility. You can also put these cutouts on display when you are out in the community doing various presentations.
- Create a coloring sheet with your mascot on it to be handed out to kids at outside events.
- Create a hand out flyer with he mascot on it for when you go out into the community to reach out to kids.

- If you have a talented seamstress in your congregation see about having a costume character made up of your mascot and have him go places to hand out flyers and coloring pages as well as appearing at all your events. He could even pose for pictures with the kids if he is really cool.



- Print your mascot on large mailing labels and hand them out as stickers.

One of the things we did as a way to meet people at a Christian music festival we atend was to make foamcore cutouts of our mascot (a sheep) and had our group go out and see how many signatures they could get on them. Our sheep were signed by hundreds of people including members of the Newsboys, Audio Adrenaline and Plus One. Since the

festival,several of the leaders have run into people from the festival. When we tell them what church we are from,they haven't a clue but when qwe mention the sheep they say, "Oh so your the ones with the sheep, I signed that."

A mascot is a great way to attract attention to your group and as well as a really funm project for your kids. It's a "win-win" situation!"



AN A.M.O.K. RESOURCE

copyright 2001, David C. Weiss/A.M.O.K.