STOP BEING A "BEST KEPT SECRET"

MAKING OUTREACH MATERIALS THAT WORK

FLYERS ★ NEWS ★ SOCIAL MEDIA

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Why Being A “Best Kept Secret” Is A Problem

Does your center ever hear, “I didn’t know you did that!”

- You offer programs and services, but people may not know they exist.
- Potential participants may not realize they are welcome.
- Families and caregivers may not know where to find help.
- Donors and community partners may not understand the impact of your work.

You can only reach the people who know you are there.

Good outreach helps people find you, understand what you offer, and decide to get involved.

Common Mistakes When Creating Materials

Unclear or Overwhelming Information

- Too much text
- No clear headline
- Important details are hard to find

Writing That Doesn't Connect

- Too much jargon
- Long sentences
- Focusing on the organization instead of the reader



Common Mistakes When Creating Materials

Weak or Ineffective Visuals

- Blurry or stretched photos
- Images that don't match the message
- Cluttered layouts

Inconsistent Materials

- Different logos, colors, and fonts
- Spelling errors or missing information



How People Actually Read

Most people don't read a flyer, newsletter, or social media post word for word.

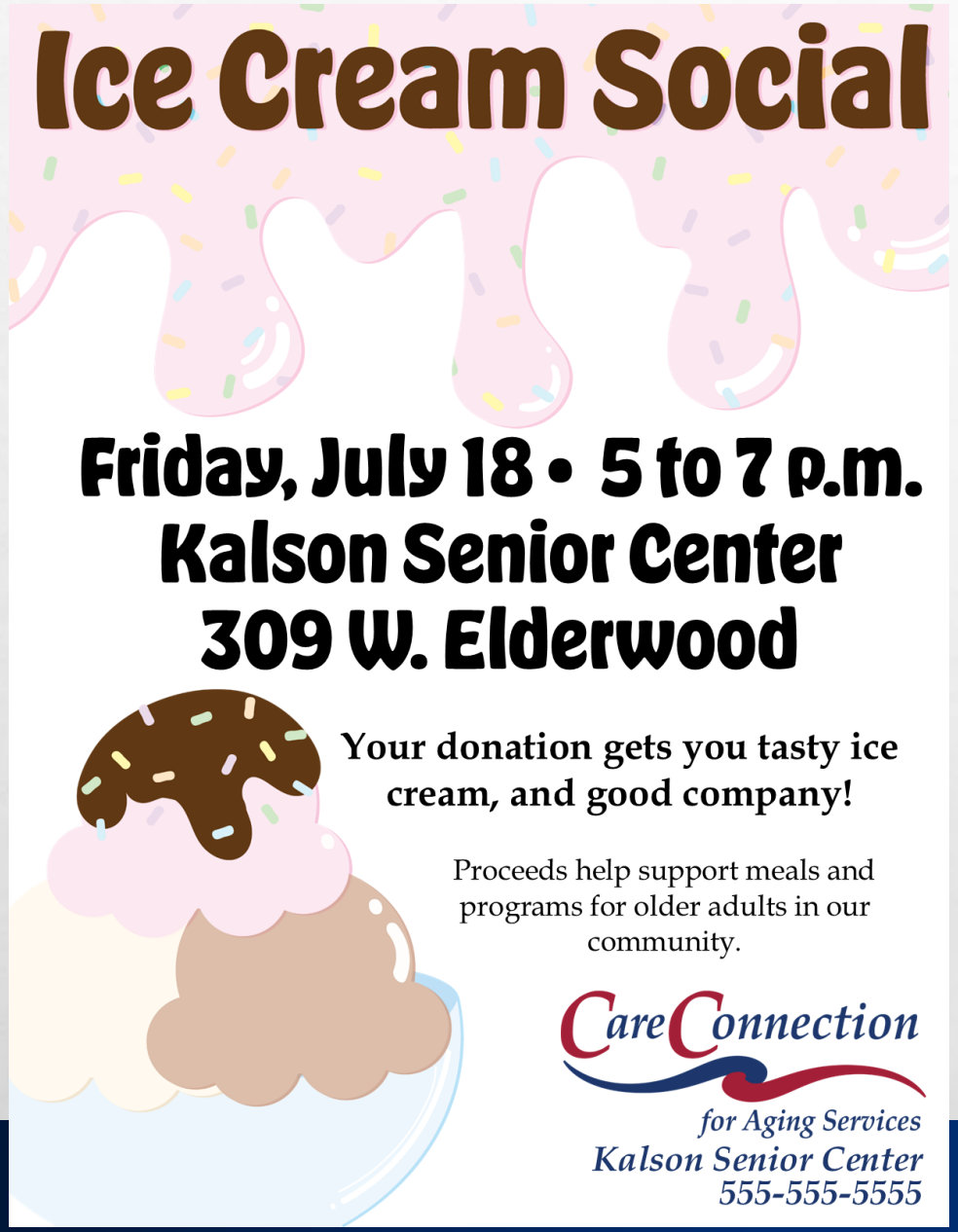
They scan for something interesting.

- Headlines catch attention.
- Photos draw the eye.
- Large or bold text signals importance.
- Short sections are easier to follow.
- Important details should be easy to find.

If everything is emphasized, nothing stands out.

Make it easy for someone to understand your message at a glance.





Building A Clear Visual Hierarchy

Think of your material as a map that leads the reader through the information.

1. **What is it?** Use a clear, noticeable headline.
2. **Why should I care?** Give people a reason to keep reading.
3. **What do I need to know?** Highlight the date, time, location, and other important details.
4. **What should I do next?** Provide registration instructions or contact information.

Design tips:

- Use two or three fonts at most.
- Choose readable font sizes.
- Use good contrast between text and background.
- Leave some empty space.
- Don't make every word bold, large, or colorful.

Need to know:

- **Date**
- **Time**
- **Location**
- **What the event is**
- **Cost**
- **Registration instructions and deadlines (if needed)**
- **Contact information**

A good flyer contains all the information a person needs to make the decision to attend.



Writing So People Actually Read It

Write for people who may know nothing about your center.

- Use everyday language.
- Keep sentences and paragraphs short.
- Put the most important information first.
- Avoid jargon and unnecessary details.
- Use “you” when it helps the reader feel included.
- Focus on what the information means to the reader.

For longer materials, ask yourself:

- Who am I trying to reach?
- What do they care about?
- What do I want them to know?
- What do I want them to do next?

Clear writing isn't writing down to people. It's making information easier to understand.

Headlines Matter

Your headline may be the only thing someone reads.

A good headline tells the reader what the story is about and gives them a reason to continue.

Too vague: “Center News”

More specific: “Lakeside Senior Center Celebrates Volunteers At Annual Appreciation Lunch”

Too vague: “Upcoming Activities”

More specific: “Try Something New: Beginner Line Dancing Starts Tuesday”

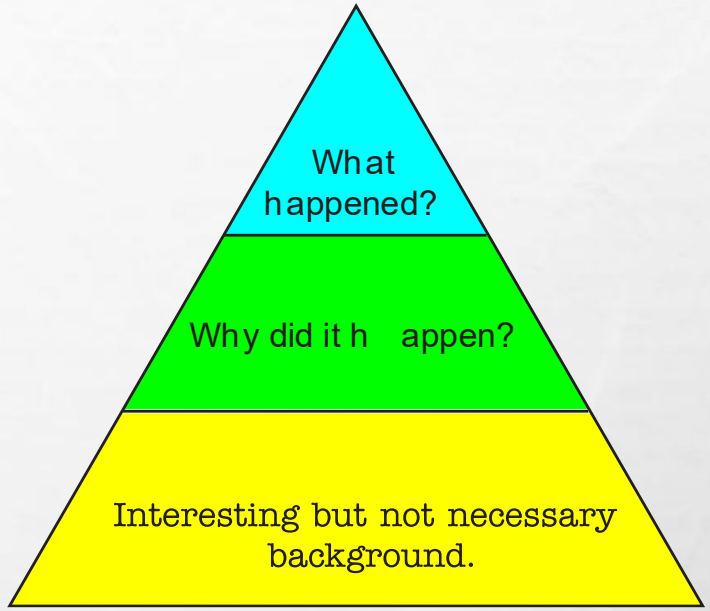
- Be specific.
- Use clear, familiar words.
- Put the main point first.
- Avoid headlines that could apply to almost anything.

How To Write A News Article

A simple news article answers the important questions early.

1. What happened? Start with the main news. Don't make readers search for the point.
2. Why does it matter? Explain why the event, program, or announcement is important.
3. Who was involved? Include relevant people, groups, or community partners.
4. When and where did it happen? Provide the details readers need.
5. What else should readers know? Add interesting background, a quote, or additional details.

A useful rule: write the most important information first. If you need to shorten the article, you can trim from the end.



Three little pigs in journalist style:
"A wooden residence was reduced to rubble last night when a long-standing feud between a wolf and a family of bachelor pigs erupted into violence. A police spokesperson stated that feuds of this kind are 'predictable occurrences between natural enemies.' A neighbor said, 'I warned those pigs to build with brick.'"

Where Can You Find News?



- Special activities and celebrations
- Volunteers and community partners
- Participant accomplishments
- New programs or services
- Fundraisers and donation
- Community resources
- Interesting facts about what your center provides
- Upcoming events people should know about

Taking Better Photos

You don't need a professional camera to take useful photos. A phone is often enough.

- **Check the background.** Move clutter out of the way.
- **Find good lighting.** Natural light is often best; try to keep it in front of your subject.
- **Get closer.** Make people and activities the focus.
- **Keep the camera level.** Avoid awkward angles.
- **Take several shots.** People blink and move.
- **Ask permission.** Respect participants' wishes and photo policies.

Choose photos that show people participating, connecting, creating, and enjoying themselves.

Avoid blurry images, stretched photos, and pictures that portray older adults in a negative or unrealistic way.



Make Your Materials Recognizable

Your flyers, newsletters, and social media posts should look like they come from the same organization.

- Use the correct logo.
- Keep your main colors consistent.
- Choose two or three fonts and use them consistently.
- Keep your writing tone consistent.
- Use similar design choices across platforms.
- Make sure your materials are readable and accessible.

Consistency helps people recognize your center and builds familiarity over time.

You don't need a complicated branding guide. **Start by using what you already have consistently.**









A Word Of Caution About Generative AI

AI tools can help with brainstorming, drafting, and proofreading, but use them thoughtfully.

- Check names, dates, locations, phone numbers, and other facts.
- Make sure the wording sounds like your organization.
- Review images carefully for strange or inaccurate details.
- Don't use AI-generated content without checking it.
- Don't enter private participant information into tools that aren't approved for that use.

For writing, a useful approach is to write your own material and use AI to help with proofreading or improving clarity while keeping your voice. **AI can be a tool, but it shouldn't replace your judgment or the human touch.**





Social Media: Getting The Word Out

Use The Platforms People Know

- Facebook is still the most-used social media platform, followed by Instagram. Especially among 55+

Post Regularly

- Share upcoming activities, special events, reminders, and changes to schedules.
- Post photos from events to show people what happens at your center.
- Mix announcements with fun, interesting, and useful content.
- Keep information clear and easy to find.



Social Media: Getting The Word Out



Show the FUN!

- Social media is a chance to show what makes your center a welcoming place.

Make Posts Easy to Understand

- Put the most important information first.
- Include dates, times, locations, and contact information when needed.
- Use a clear photo or graphic that supports the message.
- Keep text short enough that people can quickly understand the point.

Before You Share, Check Your Work

Use this checklist for flyers, newsletters, articles, and social media posts.

- Is the main message clear?
- Is the headline specific?
- Is the important information easy to find?
- Is the writing concise and easy to understand?
- Are names, dates, times, and contact details correct?
- Are photos clear, appropriate, and permitted?
- Does the material look like it belongs to your center?
- Have you followed any required review or approval process?

Putting It All Together

"WHEELS FOR MEALS" CAR SHOW

SATURDAY MAY 31, 8 AM - 2:30 PM
970 E. MAIN AVE. KALSON, MO.

A BENEFIT FOR THE SERVICES AT THE KALSON SENIOR CENTER.

PROVIDING MEALS AND SERVICES FOR FOLKS 60 AND OVER

CHECK-IN: 8-10 AM · JUDGING 10 AM - 1 PM · AWARDS 1:30- 2:30
BISCUTS AND GRAVY FOR CONTESTANTS AT 8:30 · SHINE ONLY EVENT

AWARDS FOR:

- MOST SENIOR DRIVER
- MOST SENIOR CAR
- TOP 5 CARS
- TOP 5 TRUCKS
- TOP 5 BIKES



"BEST OF"
$ CASH PRIZES $

- SHOW
- PAINT
- ENGINE
- FURTHEREST TRAVELED

DOOR PRIZE DRAWINGS
GREAT FUN FOR FAMILY WEEKEND!

JAMMIN' TUNES PROVIDED BY DJ "THE SAXMAN" "GRIFTERDUNE" PRODUCTIONS

ENTRY FEE $25 PER CAR - DAY OF
FREE ADMISSION TO BROWSE

SPONSORSHIPS PROVIDED BY: *YOUR NAME HERE!*
CALL US TODAY TO BECOME A SPONSOR!

LUNCH MENU

PULLED PORK $7.00 MEAL DEAL/ $5.00 SANDWICH
HOT DOG MEAL DEAL $5.00/ $ 3.00 SANDWICH
MEAL DEAL INCLUDES SANDWICH, BAKED BEANS, CHIPS,

CALL BERNICE, AT KALSON SENIOR CENTER

Clear Hierarchy of information.

Kalson Senior Center
2nd Annual Car Show

Benefiting programs & services for older adults in our community.

Clean Visuals



~ Join us 970 E. Main Ave. Kalson, MO. ~

- Saturday, May 31st Opens at 8 a.m.
- Judging at 10 a.m.
- Cash Prizes and Trophies at 1:30 p.m.
- Car entry Fee: $25
- Live Music by DJ "Saxman" and GrifterDune Productions
- Biscuits & Gravy Breakfast, BBQ Lunch available for purchase
- Door Prizes & Raffles



Consistent Branding

CareConnection for Aging Services

Kalson Senior Center • 555-555-5555

Questions?

What questions do you have about making your center's outreach clearer, more engaging, and easier to recognize?

Contact

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