

Resources and ideas...

Expanding Distribution While Raising Funds

The broadsheet—“Truth...in Preparation for Revolution,” explains what the *Revolution* expansion and fund drive is all about in a compelling and interesting way. Read it as you reach out to others, and use all its contents to show people what the newspaper and this fund drive are all about. This is the official fund drive brochure.

We want to get this broadsheet out to tens of thousands of people. Not all of those people will contribute to the fund drive, but many will, and this is part of the process of introducing the paper to everyone, and “planting seeds” for fundraising. One of the features of the broadsheet is the selection of comments from readers—they come from people in all walks of life, and people speak about what draws them to *Revolution* newspaper. Drawing the attention of potential donors to these comments, and speaking from the heart about what this newspaper means to you, can help people see the importance of supporting *Revolution* newspaper with their contributions.

In the course of that, here are some particular ideas and resources:

Expanding Distribution While Getting Out The “Wanted” T-Shirts

Right now, and up through the Labor Day weekend, we are encouraging all distributors to broadly enlist all kinds of vendors, from street vendors to flea market sellers, to commercial retail outlets, to sell “Wanted” T-shirts and tote-bags.

Let’s do this, and expand distribution in the course of this. Set things up with vendors so that everyone who buys a T-shirt gets a fundraising broadsheet. And, in case the shirts and broadsheets get “detached,” we developed a sticker that can be put right on the shirt so people can find the paper.

In the course of involving people in selling “Wanted” T-shirts and “Wanted” tote-bags we will meet people who are open to distributing the newspaper. We should give them bundles of papers and give them a way to send you the money they get selling the paper. If you don’t have the capacity now to stay in touch with every vendor you meet

who will sell the paper, for whatever reason, DO NOT LET THAT LIMIT DISTRIBUTION. Give them a bundle, get their contact information and walk through with them how to send the money from selling the paper (send it to the address in the newspaper for RCP Publications). The distribution staff at *Revolution* will make sure that these distributors are plugged in to getting more papers.

We also want to encourage people to explore the possibility of setting up street vendors who will sell the paper, and keep a percentage of what they make. Contact RCP Publications for details.

The Back To School Issue

The issue of *Revolution* that comes out on August 20th will include a “Back-to-School” supplement that is intended for use for the entire period of schools starting up, and into the beginning of the school year. Here are some thoughts on things you can do to facilitate getting students to subscribe to the paper and donate:

When tabling on campuses be prepared to take credit cards to sell subscriptions, take donations, and sign up sustainers. **Anyone can do this**, and **you do not need a credit card machine**. Here’s how: Have a laptop with an internet connection ready and the Donate page at revcom.us open in a browser (many schools have wireless “hot-spots”).

To donate, have people click on the Donate link at revcom.us on the spot with their credit card.

To subscribe, students (or anyone) can sign up for and pay for their subs on the spot online. Click on the “Subscribe” button on the home page at revcom.us.

Again, all you need to let students subscribe, sustain, or get a subscription with their credit cards (and most debit cards will work as credit cards) is an internet-connected computer, with the Donate and Subscribe pages at revcom.us open for students to make donations, sign up as sustainers, or buy subs on the spot.

Also, as part of expanding distribution on campuses, have plenty of the handouts available that tell students how to get their main or departmental libraries to order *Revolution*

* Underlined items in this article can be found online at www.revcom.us and navigating to the “Fundraising Resources” web page.

newspaper and the DVD.

Having the paper in every library, and in department lounges and offices, gets the newspaper into the mix on campuses and makes it accessible to a wider group of students, faculty and staff. Having many campus libraries and departments getting subs to the paper also helps create a climate where the paper is integrated into the debates and discussions going on within fields of learning. And institutional subscriptions are a source of funds for the newspaper. Schools often have a number of different libraries and departments also subscribe to periodicals and journals--lots of possibilities here for expansion.

We want to develop campus distributors. A [campus distributor sign-up form](#) is available at revcom.us web site. This gives students the option of getting 20, 50 or 100 papers / issue.

Note: We need to learn more about selling our paper on campuses - it is true that there are a lot of free papers, but those papers have corporate (or other) sponsors or rely on ads. There is a basis for students to understand why we do not rely on those sources of funding. It will be important to put this contradiction before students, and involve them in figuring out how to solve it.

We want to unleash students to create an atmosphere where *Revolution* really becomes part of the scene on these campuses. How do the students that are interested in distribution see doing this? We have to learn as we lead that process.

Building readership of the e-edition

The e-edition of *Revolution* is a very accessible way that people we meet can stay connected with the paper, week in and week out. When tabling on campuses, have the [online e-subscription form](#) available so people can fill it out themselves on the spot. Or, take [contact cards](#) with you to all events, tabling and in the bookstores. Every week/or couple of weeks (or after a big event), send in all forms, or — if you can — have a reliable volunteer compile all contact information onto an Excel file and email that Excel file to RCP Publications (rcppubs@hotmail.com). We can easily use your Excel file to import the email addresses into our system of sending out the weekly e-edition of our paper. The e-edition is not a replacement for the print edition of *Revolution*, but another way to connect with people.

We welcome all ideas that people have on

transforming this. Our goal is to more than double our current number of e-subscribers by the end of the year.

The Importance of Library Subscriptions

Institutional subscriptions to *Revolution* (which are priced higher than normal subs) include both the English and Spanish versions of the paper. This is something everyone can do – get their library to subscribe (see the sheet with [instructions on how to get your library to subscribe](#)).

There is particular importance to having libraries making *Revolution* available in Spanish, and here again (as on campuses and in communities), having libraries carry the paper is a way to expand the presence of the paper, and to raise money.

It has been our experience that libraries, and many progressive librarians in particular, are really looking for ways to serve their Spanish-speaking/reading populations. They recognize that this is an underserved population. We will have the form that explains how to get libraries to order the paper and the DVD online at revcom.us soon. So, if you are fundraising/tabling, out at an event, etc. in Spanish-speaking communities, this is something that people could do that would make a very important contribution, both in expanding distribution and fundraising.

Rely on the Fundraising Broadsheet

These are just a few suggestions and resources to use in the course of taking out the fund drive that we can help get a good dynamic going between raising funds and expanding the reach of *Revolution*.

Again, we want to emphasize the importance of the Special *Revolution* Fund Drive Broadsheet—“Truth...in Preparation for Revolution”—the official fund drive brochure. A lot of thought went into presenting this information in a compelling and interesting way. Everyone involved in the fund drive should read it and become familiar with all its contents so that you can use it to show people what the newspaper and this fund drive are all about. We want to get this broadsheet out to tens of thousands of people. Not all of those people will contribute to the fund drive, but many will, and this is part of the process of introducing the paper to everyone, and “planting seeds” for fundraising. □

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