

# **Consumer Outreach/Education**

**Some Suggested Strategies**

# Distinctions Between Public Information and Public Education

## ***PUBLIC INFORMATION***

- Tends to be reactive
- Short term activities
- Indirect approach using the media as our voice
- Lack of continuity and consistency
- Little control over final product
- Zero control over who receives the message
- Limited control over timing

## ***PUBLIC EDUCATION***

- Proactive
- Long range plan with series of activities to comprehensively reach out and educate citizens directly
- Direct approach using our own voice
- Continuity and consistency of approach
- Complete control over final product or distortions
- Greater control over of recipients
- Control of timing
- Control over comprehensiveness of the message

# Why Outreach/Education Is Important

- **Creates knowledgeable consumers**
  - ⇒ **Low interest**
  - ⇒ **Low involvement**
  - ⇒ **Not a visual story**
- **Helps carry out regulatory mission**
  - ⇒ **Credibility**
  - ⇒ **Build support**

# Why Outreach/Education Is Important

- **Provides effective monitoring tool**
  - ⇒ **Market research**
  - ⇒ **Early warning system**
  - ⇒ **Tests relevance of policies/programs**
- **Regulatory — Reinvention**
  - ⇒ **From reactive; command-and-control**
  - ⇒ **To proactive market referee/performance based**

# Objectives of Outreach/Education

- **Awareness**
- **Understanding**
- **Acceptance**
- **Action**

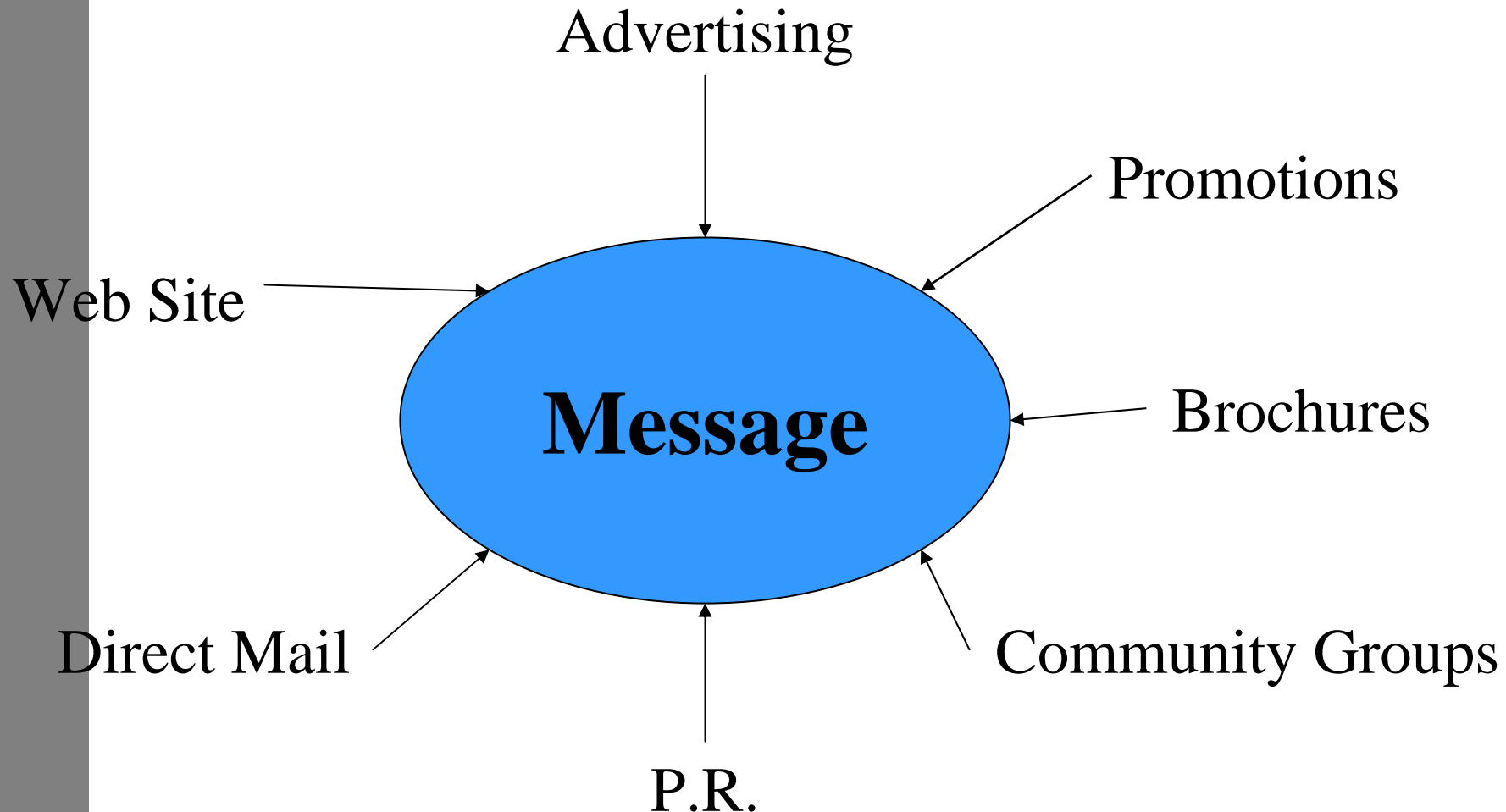
# Questions to Answer

- **What is the advantage for me?**
- **How can I compare?**
- **Who will protect me?**
- **Is it safe and reliable?**
- **Where can I go for objective, unbiased information?**

# Education Plan — Instrument

- **Research-baseline information**
- **Strategic Plan**
  - ⇒ **Goals/Objectives**
  - ⇒ **Strategies/Tactics**
- **Message Development**
- **Delivery Mechanism**
- **Measurement and Evaluation**

# Integrated Approach





# **Outreach/Education — Key Lessons**

- **Research — Qualitative**
- **Collateral materials — Before activities begin**
- **Clear objectives — Measurable**
- **Don't underestimate “grass roots”**

# Conclusions

- **Outreach/Education New Core Responsibility/Competency**
- **Connection to Constituents**
- **Formal or Informal**
- **Feedback —  
Policy/Program/Performance**
- **Strategic Ally**

# **Others Avenues of Public Involvement**

- **Rulemakings**
- **Working Groups**
- **Hearings**
- **Agenda Meetings**

# Rulemaking

- **Comment period required by law**
- **All comments published**
- **Substantive changes republished**
- **Try to distribute rule prior to publication for input**

# Working Groups

- **BPU using working group to:**
  - Get buy in**
  - Solicit new ideas**
  - Prevent problems as much as possible**
  - Obtain expertise agency doesn't have**
  - Have an open, transparent process**

# Hearings

- **Held where case is retained – OAL or BPU**
- **For fact finding and development of the record**
- **Anyone can attend – only parties actually participate**

# **Agenda Meetings**

- **Public attends, doesn't participate**
- **Only exchange is between Board and Staff**
- **Decisions made in open meeting**
- **Limited exceptions for matters to be heard on closed or executive session**