



Planning your event

Effective planning for your event will ensure that it has a better likelihood of being successful. Some of the following points can serve as a checklist for you.

Share the load

- Work as a committee and allocate publicity to one person. Allow at least three months to consult and plan your event.
- Work with your local council or local community group, such as Landcare, Rotary, Lions and Scouts can help with the work and provide extra volunteers for your event.

Location is important

- Where possible, choose a visual location with a plenty of local traffic. This will help to highlight the benefits of your efforts to the local community.

Invite your audience to participate

- Invite your audience to the event. A personal invitation is an effective method for gaining their support. Formal invitations may also be required for special events.

Attract your audience

- Food and Drinks
 - When running a community weed-clearing event, consider providing food and drinks and promoting it to encourage more volunteers.
 - Local community groups or retailers may be able to provide free/discounted food.
- Prizes and competitions
 - Offer prizes or run a competition and announce the winners at your event.
 - Your local nursery, hardware store or businesses may provide a prize at a discounted price or free of charge. Remember to acknowledge any assistance or support.
- Personalities and local celebrities
 - The right 'personality' can draw a decent local crowd.
 - Mayors, Councillors or members of local catchment organisations may be willing to attend as a public relations exercise.
 - Invite your celebrity as early as possible as their diaries fill fast.
- Make it family-friendly
 - Ask around for volunteer child minders to encourage families to attend. Students undertaking early childhood studies or suitably qualified people may like to help out.
 - Consider running some weed games and/or activities to educate and entertain children

Use gimmicks

- Come up with some new and quirky ways to get public attention.
- Woody Weed may also be available to attend your event—contact your State or Territory Coordinator (contact details at www.weedbuster.info)

Organise a crowd

- Invite local community groups such as Landcare, Rotary, Lions and Scouts.
- Invite the staff, students and parents at the local primary or secondary school to attend. If your event is during school hours, contact the principal or environmental teachers to see how it may fit into the curriculum.

Publicise the event

Use your local media

- Invite a journalist and press photographer from the local newspaper to your event.
- Use community announcements broadcasts at local television and radio stations to advertise your event.

Remind your community that the event is on:

Try to get as much coverage from as many different sources as possible. Aim for your target audience to receive information about the event three times from three different sources:

- Put banners up at the proposed activity site.
- Distribute a flier to key groups and do a local letterbox drop.
- Put up signs at your local shopping centre, community hall and local library.
- Discuss weeds and Weedbusters in newsletters published by schools, universities, churches or Landcare groups.
- Follow up formal invitations with a phone call.

Encouraging involvement

Other activities

Organise other enjoyable activities to encourage people to come your event. Weedbusters is a fun event so let your imagination run wild!

Activities could include:

- Tree planting
- Picnics or BBQs
- Face painting
- Wildlife shows
- Games and competitions (“Tug-of-Weed-War” or 3-legged “Speed-for-Weed” race)
- Talks and guided tours on local birds (contact www.birdsaustralia.com.au) or native plants (contact the Association of Societies for Growing Australian Plants www.asgap.org.au)

Highlight the personal benefits

Emphasise the benefits for your audience/participants to encourage them to get involved. Try to include a variety of benefits, because everyone’s motivations are different.

Examples of personal benefits include:

- Profiting from the reduction of local weed problems through:
 - an increase in property values
 - a safer area for local kids
 - decreased production costs and increased returns on farm land
- Improving the environment and habitat for local wildlife
- Meeting new people, or having a family day out
- Discovering more about your local environment and weeds

Evaluating the Event

- Evaluation will determine the effectiveness of your activities and assists decision making for the following year.
- Evaluation can be done by a formal survey or by just talking to participants on the day.
- Identify what worked (so you can do it again), and what didn’t and what changes are necessary.
- Involve participants in the evaluation. If they feel they have a say in the future of the activity, it might entice them to come back.