

TACTIC

ADVANCED LEAFLETING

People are more likely to take your leaflet, read it, and remember what it's all about if you deliver it with flair. (Or ice cream!)

CONTRIBUTED BY

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"MAKE IT FUN. MAKE IT UNUSUAL. MAKE IT MEMORABLE."

Leafletting is the bread-and-butter of many campaigns. It's also annoying and ineffective, for the most part. How many times have you taken a leaflet just because you forgot to pull your hand back in time, only to throw it in the next available trash can? Or you're actually interested and stick it in your pocket, but then you never get around to reading it because of the dull design and tiny type? Well, if that's what a socially engaged person like you does, just imagine what happens to all the leaflets you give out to harried career-jockeys as they rush to or from work.

In a word, if you're doing standard leafletting, you're wasting everybody's time. What you need is *advanced* leafletting: adding a creative twist that gets people's attention and makes them more receptive to your message.

Be inventive: In advanced leafletting, we acknowledge that if you're going to hand out leaflets like a robot, you might as well have a robot hand them out. Yes, an actual leafletting robot. In 1998, the Institute for Applied Autonomy built "Little Brother," a small, intentionally cute, 1950s-style metal robot to be a pamphleteer. In their tests, strangers avoided a human pamphleteer, but would go out of their way to take literature from the robot.

Be creative: Make your leaflets and their distribution fun, unique and memorable. Climb up on some guy's shoulders and hand out leaflets from there, as one of the authors of this piece did as a student organizer. The shareholder heading into a meeting is more likely to take, read, and remember the custom message inside the

RELATED TOOLS

Stories

- Conflict Kitchen
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- Public Art Nanny Hotline
- Stolen Gas Campaign
- #YouStink

Tactics

- Artistic vigil
- Clandestine leafletting
- Creative petition delivery
- Currency hacking
- Guerrilla theatre

Principles

- Balance art and message
- Consider your audience
- Kill them with kindness
- Show, don't tell
- Stay on message
- Use others' prejudices against them

Methodologies

fortune cookie you just handed her than a rectangle of paper packed with text.

Be artistic: Using theatre and costumes to leaflet can be effective. In the 1980s, activists opposed to US military intervention in Central America dressed up as waiters and carried maps of Central America on serving trays, with little green plastic toy soldiers glued to the map. They would go up to people in the street and say, "Excuse me, sir, did you order this war?" When the "no" response invariably followed, they would present an itemized bill outlining the costs: "Well, you paid for it!" Even if the person they addressed didn't take the leaflet, they'd get the message.

The point is, leafleting is not a bad tactic. It's still a good way to tell passersby what you're marching for, or why you're making so much noise on a street corner. But people are more likely to take your leaflet, read it, and remember what it's all about if you deliver it with flair. (Or ice cream!)

Originally published in Beautiful Trouble.

LEARN MORE

Little Brother

21st Century Digital Art, 2016

<http://www.digiart21.org/art/little-brother>

The Tactical Ice Cream Unit

Center for Tactical Magic

<http://www.tacticalmagic.org/CTM/project%20pages/TICU.htm>

- Perception box

TAGS

Action design, Art, Communications, Humour, Pranks, Street protest