Demonstrating the Fine Art Of the Demo: The Three Kinds of Demos a Group Can Host and How to Make Them Effective

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Why Host a Demo?

- A Demo is a great way to recruit new members
- A Demo is a great way to get your name out in the community
- A Demo is a great way to share your knowledge with others
- A Demo is a great way to show the work you’ve done on a project
- A Demo is a great way to practice your fighting skills
The Three Kinds of Demos

- Recruitment
- Public Relations
- Educational

Can you merge themes into one demo?

Yes, but you should make sure there is one main focus. For example, there is no reason you couldn’t recruit at a PR demo or educate at a recruitment demo, but you should make sure to focus on one theme.
Recruitment Demo

- The main purpose of this demo is getting people interested in joining the SCA.
- The focus will be on the activities people in the SCA participate in, the SCA’s history, and how people can get involved.
- Examples of where to hold recruitment demos include college campuses, activity fairs, and community family events.
- It is important to have examples of newsletters, pamphlets, or brochures on the SCA, and business cards with dates, times, and locations of your local meetings.
Public Relations Demo

The main purpose of this demo is letting people in the community know about the SCA and the great things your group can do for the community.

The focus will be on the activities people in the SCA can do to enhance an experience for the community or a group of people.

Examples of where to hold public relation demos include Art-in-the-Park fairs, history days or local Renaissance festivals, Yule events, and Farmers’ Markets.

Good opportunity to showcase your talents in the Arts and Sciences. Bring both educational and recruitment material, and remember that you are there to enhance someone else’s experience.
Educational Demo

The main purpose of this demo is to educate a group of people on history and how people did things in the Middle Ages and Renaissance.

This kind of demo is vital for the SCA to keep its 501(c)3 status.

Examples of where to hold educational demos are schools, scout troop meetings, churches, history fairs, and community history days.

Good opportunity to showcase your talents in the Arts and Sciences. Bring both educational and recruitment material. This is the perfect time to bring hands-on activities for people to try themselves, as well as any source books you have on the subject you are demonstrating.
The Importance of Advertising in Advance

- Getting your name out there in advance gets people curious and looking on the web.
- People are more likely to show up when the demo has been advertised in some way.
- People interested in knowing more about the SCA will be more likely to show up.
- You may find someone who has wanted to join for a while and didn’t know how to contact the local group.
- Your chances of repeating the demo in the future are better with a good turnout.
Where To Advertise?

- Newspapers
- College School papers
- Radio
- Local TV news
- Local community channel
- Flyers in coffee shops and local hangouts
- Local library
- Church bulletins and community boards
- Email Lists (make sure the advertisement is appropriate and welcome)
- Local scout troops and group meetings
- Any other place that strikes you as a good place to advertise
Available Resources

- http://www.sca.org
- http://www.sca.org/media/
- http://www.northshield.org
- Northshield Deputy Seneschal for Media Relations Page
- Northshield Chatelaine’s Page
- Known Worlde Handbook (for ideas)
- Northshield Chatelaines email list
- Other groups. Ask for help when needed!
Don’t Forget!!

- Flyers or handouts
- Business cards with contact info on it
- Sign-up Contact Sheet for people who want more info
- Educational material
- Extra materials for hands-on fun
- A copy of the Media Relations Policy
- Extra chairs and tables
- Group Banner (if the group has one)
- Extra cloth to hide modern items
- Something to demonstrate
- Good eye contact and the willingness to talk to people
- Follow-up with potential newcomers within 48 hours of the event
Don’t Forget!!

- Use terminology that is easy to understand. Remember, demo attendees do not know the SCA.
- Avoid words like “medieval” and “rapier.” People might misunderstand what you are trying to say. Instead, use words like “Middle Ages” and “fencing.”
- Avoid talking about religion, politics, brewing and vintning, or “adult” activities. Instead, talk about the family-friendly aspects of our organization.
- Make sure your activities are age appropriate. Do not have 4-year-olds make glass beads or the elderly work on your forge.
- Have a warranted marshal on-site if you are doing any kind of fighting. If your group does not have one, ask a regional or kingdom officer to assist.
- Help is generally an email or a phone call away!