

## **PROMOTING NATIONAL MODEL RAILROAD MONTH**

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National Model Railroad Month offers us the perfect chance to show off our handiwork and at the same time introduce others to the hobby that gives us so much pleasure.

Do it as an individual. Take a few hours, a day, or a whole weekend and invite your friends, (all of them, not just your model railroading friends) neighbors or the whole community to visit your layout. You will be surprised at how many of your co-workers and neighbors down the street are anxious to see what you have been working on so hard. Your layout has given you a great deal of pleasure. This is a great opportunity to share that pleasure with others. You will get additional pleasure from all the "ohhhs" and "ahhhhs" of your visitors.

But why stop there? Why not get your whole Division involved? There is much more you can do as a group.

### **WHAT YOUR DIVISION CAN DO**

National Model Railroad Month activities need not be limited to layout shows or open houses. Your division might consider putting on several clinics during the month. They can be held where you normally hold meetings, at an area model railroad club, at hobby shops, in private homes, in schools or other public buildings. Visitors at your show or open house can be invited back to follow-up clinics. Keep your topics basic and show the beginners how to get started. You might consider beginning with planning, building benchwork and laying track, progressing through wiring, going on to scenery and ending with simple operations. Remember that beginners want to know how to begin. There will be plenty of time to learn advanced techniques later. Be sure to include plenty of opportunities for questions and answers. Pairing interested visitors with a member that they can call later with additional questions will encourage people to take that first step. Having refreshments is a nice touch. Coffee or punch and a plate of cookies will not cost much and will do a lot to put people in the right mood to enjoy your clinics.

It is very important to include children. They are the future of our hobby. Getting them started young can turn them into lifelong model railroaders and NMRA members. Consider inviting a local Cub Scout troop to visit your layout. Leaders are frequently looking for appropriate "go and see" events for the youngsters. These children are usually well behaved and very well supervised. Model Railroad month also is an excellent opportunity to adopt a Boy Scout troop and assist its young members in earning their model railroading merit badge.

You also might consider setting up a display, operating or static, in hobby shops, stores, banks, libraries or schools. An operating display need not be elaborate, but it must be automatic, or you will need to have a person available to operate it. Static exhibits in display cases can be a great way to present model railroading to a lot of people without much effort.

Both school and public libraries welcome ideas for displays and often will allow groups to promote their meetings in the display cases or windows. Libraries often have information racks where divisions may place brochures that describe their organization and their meeting times.

A carefully planned display can cover many aspects of the hobby and showcase your handiwork. It only takes a couple of beautiful models to get peoples' attention. Remember to include information about the NMRA in your display. The nice thing about a display is that it can be left in a secure case for long periods of time, giving the hobby a great deal of exposure long after National Model Railroad Month is over. Plus, they require little effort and pose little risk to the models.

Another Model Railroad Month activity could be one or more presentations or speeches on the subject of model railroading. You can contact schools, PTAs, service organizations and other groups to arrange short presentations on model railroading. The talks could be supplemented by films, videos or PowerPoint presentations. If you are interested in making a speech in public but you're a little unsure about how to do it, contact the local Toastmasters club for assistance in planning and polishing your speech. You also can ask a local teacher for help. Most will be glad to assist.

The NMRA's Kalmbach Memorial Library has several promotional tapes, dozens of clinic DVDs, and the 13 half hour tapes in the "All About Trains" series that you can borrow for the cost of postage. Call Headquarters at **423-892-2846**.

You might also want to hand out the brochure, "The Hobby of Scale Model Railroading", which is available free from the Model Railroad Industry Association, POB 28129, and Denver, CO 80228. The NMRA also has a brochure, "Get more from your hobby," that talks about the benefits of NMRA membership. You can download a PDF of that in the "Promotion" area of the Members-Only section of <https://www.nmra.org> and print off several copies.

For even more National Model Railroad Month ideas, see the article by NMRA Communications Director Gerry Leone, MMR, in the August issue of *NMRA Magazine*. It's full of examples of activities from Divisions all over the NMRA.

So now that you and your division have decided to do something for National Model Railroad Month, how do you get the word out about it? Read On.

## **SPREADING THE WORD**

Newspaper editors and their broadcast counterparts are friendly people, genuinely interested in good stories of local interest. They know they must reach into all areas to satisfy the demands made by their audiences.

Try to meet your local news people. You may discover a secret model railroader among them. After you have established a rapport with them, your job will be much easier. Local news people will be more likely to run your material because they know the source of the information

and its credibility. Depending on the size of the paper, the city editor or features editor will be your best key to the “printed word”.

The person to see at most radio or television stations is the program or news director. In the case of larger stations, the public service or community affairs director will be the person to see. Whatever their title, this person is your gateway to the airwaves and is responsible for the airing of material.

Before you go to meet these people, make sure that you have all your information organized and ready for them. Your releases, photographs, public service copy and visual aids (for newspapers and television) should be **READY TO USE**. In addition, make sure that you have all your facts straight. The following is a checklist of all the facts that you should have prepared ahead of time. Much of this information will be included in the press release or public service announcement.

- What is going on?
- Where is it taking place
- Why are you doing it?
- When are you doing it? (Time, date, place in that order)
- Who is involved? (Maybe one of their advertisers or sponsors is a model railroader).
- Cost, if any.
- Who benefits?

Also consider what plans you have for using other media for publicity. Occasionally, some TV station or newspaper will ask for an “exclusive”. Decide in advance whether you want to possibly limit your audience in exchange for potentially more coverage.

After securing the cooperation of the various media **WRITE A LETTER OF APPRECIATION TO THE STATION MANAGER OR PUBLISHER OF EACH AND EVERY NEWS OUTLET HELPING YOU**. It will make the people that you have contacted look good in the stations or paper’s eyes and they will more likely want to help you on future projects. These folks rarely, if ever, get sincere letters of appreciation. When they do, they remember them, **AND YOU!**

## **REACHING THE PUBLIC**

The range of media available to your public relations program is wide and varied. Each avenue of communication has its own special requirements and characteristics, requiring your public relations people to tailor their material to fit exact needs.

Most effective public relations programs are “across the board” publicity efforts involving the use of nearly every form of communication. In the majority of cases membership associations like the NMRA limit themselves to “public service” publicity because of budget limitations.

Traditionally, the major communications vehicles available to us have been newspapers, company newsletters, radio, television, public access cable channels and hobby publications.

They are all still very important. But today you also need to consider the new computer based “social media” outlets such as Facebook and Twitter. You may also want to look into producing a short video about your event that you can post on your division and region websites. Be sure to send it to other close by divisions and regions for use on their websites too. You can also post it on YouTube so it can be seen by thousand of members of the general public.

If all this is new to you, excellent guides are available to help you understand and use these valuable promotional tools. For help with social media, you need only turn to the NMRA Region and Division Handbook CD you (or your Division’s officers) already have. (If they don’t have a copy, have them contact your Region’s President.)

Also, if you haven’t done so already, check out the rest of the “Promotion” area of the Members-Only website at [www.nmra.org/member](http://www.nmra.org/member). There you’ll also find a special National Model Railroad Month logo you can use on the ads, posters, videos, news releases and other promotional materials you may want to create for your event.

## PREPARING A NEWS RELEASE

The news release is an important segment of good communication and is the form in which a news item about your group is sent to a communications outlet. Generally speaking, the release is written in the style of a news story, with a dateline, an appropriate lead sentence and, where suitable, quotations from the news source. The group from which the release originates is identified so that further information can be made available if needed.

Editors welcome NEWSWORTHY releases. Newspapers and broadcast news departments want the information press releases carry, provided that the release is accurate, from a trustworthy source, and sincere in presentation.

When writing your release, avoid jargon. Everything must be understandable to people who don't even know what locomotives are. Words like motive power, pike, prime mover, loco, ballast and other jargon-like terms should be avoided. If they must be used, explain what they mean. A good test for your press release is to have a neighbor or co-worker who is not a model railroader read the release. Frequently they will spot the jargon that we, as modelers, use as everyday language.

Enjoying success with a news release is not limited to the professional writer or press agent. Remember these important points when writing your release:

- Check your facts.
- Spell names correctly.
- Provide times and addresses.
- Be specific about when and where the event will take place.
- Provide the name of a contact person with work/home/cell phone numbers and email addresses.

Most releases contain the five "W's":

- Who's doing it.
- What it's all about.
- When it's going to happen.
- Where it's going to happen.
- Why it's happening.

The editor or writer will give your release more consideration if it follows established styles and techniques of preparation. Here are some of these techniques:

- Clearly identify your group as the source of the release. This identification should be in the top left-hand corner of the page. Also identify yourself clearly by name and organization and include appropriate telephone numbers, home and e-mail addresses. Both print and broadcast media need to attribute the information to a "credible" source. This source can be your division president or superintendant or other member serving as a public relations

representative. By providing this information, the media can identify your releases with newsworthy material. All news outlets are on the lookout for such useable copy.

- Also in the upper left corner, mark your copy FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE.
- When you get to the end of a page and wish to continue on another sheet, write the word “(more)” centered on the line. When your release ends, indicate the end with “-end-” or the number “-30-” centered on the line.
- Give your copy a final CAREFUL reading. It is often helpful to ask two or three people to read it and look for errors in fact or spelling.
- Before mailing, emailing or hand carrying the release to the various media, make sure that you provide all the necessary information.

One basic rule applies whether you live in a metropolitan area, a medium size city or a small town. Make sure your release is sent to the person most likely to be interested in the subject. When you read the newspaper or listen to the radio or watch television, seek the material used regularly by specific people. Pay close attention to the kind of stories the editors like best and the type of information they devote the most space to.

Quite often there is more than one person who might be interested in your story. For instance, at many newspapers there is a Features Editor, a Weekend Section Editor, a “Lifestyle” Editor, as well as the usual City Editor and Assignments Editor. The same can hold true for radio and television stations. Most stations have a News Director, Assignments Desk Editor plus many on-air personalities and reporters that can be sent releases. Find out if any of them are model railroad enthusiasts and send them copies of your release. They will help you get the word out.

There are ways to increase the probability that your press release or public service announcement (PSA) will be read and aired. First, assure that the release or PSA is well written and follows the guidelines above. Second, spread your eggs across several baskets. Most people regularly listen to more than one radio station and watch many different kinds of TV shows. In other words, send your release to EVERY radio and television station and EVERY cable TV company in your area; and if you are in or near a large metropolitan area, send them to nearby towns as well. People will drive the distance if you are offering what they want to see.

## **INCLUDE PHOTOS**

The composition of the photographs that you include with your releases is extremely important. Newspapers want action photographs. When professional newspaper photographers take photos for a story, it is usually of the trains and “real” people often aren’t even in the scene! The trains are the focus and action, after all that is what you are inviting people to see. A photo of John Doe in the front and an out-of-focus train in the background tells an editor nothing except that John Doe is standing in front of something. Live steam is generally the only scale

that will consistently have people in the photographs because the trains are “rideable” and that is the focus of the attention.

There are two types of photographs to avoid: Newspapers very rarely publish “grip and grin” photographs. These are photos of two people smiling and shaking hands usually while an award is being presented. Unless it is an event such as receiving a Nobel Prize or other significant award, grip and grin photos often end up in the trash. Newspapers also rarely publish “team photos”. These are photos of an entire team (or division members) in front of their layout. Again, the focus of the photograph needs to be on the trains and action instead of the people.

A how-to on photography is beyond the scope of this guide, but a couple of notes on the subject are in order. First, the chances are very high that a member of your division is also a good amateur photographer with the skill and equipment to take publishable pictures. Make that person your official National Model Railroad month photographer! Second, most media outlets today prefer digital photos. That means using a 12-megapixel camera on its highest settings is a must.

## **RADIO**

Under the Federal Communications Commission in the United States and the Canadian Radio-Television Telecommunications Commission in Canada, all broadcast stations (AM, FM, Television) are obligated to devote a portion of their programming to public affairs. Public affairs may take the form of news broadcasts, community bulletin boards, or news and current events features. The actual amounts and types of public affairs material used are up to individual station policies. However even though they are required to air public affairs programming they are under no obligation to specifically air *your* public affairs material.

In general, though, most stations make a dedicated effort to help all they can. In a few cases, however, you’ll find that some will not seem very willing to assist. If this occurs, politely leave your material with them. They may surprise you and run it anyway. If you are pushy, most will take exception to you and, your release and possibly future releases will be destined for the trash.

In addition to the guidelines set forth for preparing a news release, there are certain visual, or sound aids you should be prepared to provide broadcasters in your appeal for coverage. The following are some tips for the various media.

- The basic material provided by your news release should be sufficient for editors to build a news item for insertion into a newscast, feature program or featurette. Most editors in radio and television prefer to re-write from releases and fact-sheets provided by sponsoring groups.
- In addition to your releases, however, many stations want “spot announcement” copy that tells your story with interest and in the shortest time possible. The average length of radio

public service copy is between 15 and 20 seconds, however, public service announcement (PSA) editors often prefer a little more information that they may use. Your copy can be for 30 to 60 seconds and will be edited down.

- In writing your PSA copy, keep your words down to a bare minimum without losing the descriptive qualities that you feel will draw a response from listeners. Avoid writing in newspaper style and steer away from long words containing more than two or three syllables. Try to keep your copy in a conversational frame and remember the five “W’s” mentioned earlier. Send a public service announcement to the attention of the Public Service Director. The same goes for both Television and radio. A sample 30-second PSA is included at the end of this guide.
- On some stations you maybe able to arrange for an articulate member of your group to appear on an interview show. Make sure that this person really knows their stuff and can speak clearly and to the point. Avoid the long-winded individual who likes to dominate your bull sessions. You can’t afford to belabor a subject on the radio.
- When you go to a radio station in person, dress “professionally”. This doesn’t necessarily mean a suit and tie. However, showing up dressed in such regalia as a railroad hat or vests with patches may lead the interviewer to conclude that you are not running with a “full head of steam”.
- Consider inviting a local radio station to do a live remote from your event. If properly promoted to the radio station, it can provide a win-win experience for your division as well as the radio station. Many radio stations are looking for novel “remotes” that they can do to increase listenership. Just about everyone likes trains—from children to adults. A live remote can give a radio station the opportunity to get live audio from trains with DCC sound as well as to interview modelers and talk to visitors about the great time they had and what they liked best. Lots of animation or extremely well detailed layouts or modules catch the eye quickly, and when interviewed, the average visitor will often gush over how fantastic it is. It should be noted, however, that a remote from your event is probably more likely to happen in smaller cities and towns than in large metropolitan areas, but it never hurts to ask!

## **TELEVISION**

Television, both broadcast and cable, requires two simultaneous operations: the transmission of sight and sound.

The material that you have prepared for radio use often will satisfy the audio requirements of television. With the addition of suitable video material, your radio copy may be all that is needed to provide the audio track for a TV PSA.

You may want to provide that video material yourself, but there are some issues to consider before you do. In this day of HD broadcasting, technical standards for video content have



become very high. That means the footage you shot for the promotional video discussed earlier, even if shot using a consumer grade HD camera, may not be good enough. While some stations accept amateur “live camcorder” video for breaking news events such as fires or airplane crashes, “home movies” may not cut it for a human-interest story, which is what your event will be considered by most TV stations. The best advice we can give you here is to contact the TV stations and cables systems in your area to find out what they will or will not accept.

However, if the station or cable system decides that your event is of sufficient interest to their audience, they may be willing to come out in advance of your event to shoot video footage themselves. Your job is to convince them that they should! Of course, if you have access to professional video cameras and editing equipment...and the people who know how to use it...by all means make use of these resources. The easier you make it for a TV station or cable system to help promote your event, the more likely it is that they will.

## **PRINT ADS AND POSTERS**

Everything we've talked about so far has had to do with promotional material you can place with local media at no charge. Print ads are different. Chances are you'll have to pay to have them run if you want to use them in local commercial newspapers and magazines. On the other hand, you may be able to place a free ad in a local community or church paper or in the newsletter of the company you work for. Check around. You can also use your print ad in non-print applications such as websites. Posters, on the other hand, can usually be placed in desirable locations free of charge. Places like the bulletin boards at work, school or church. Bulletin boards are also available in local businesses such as supermarkets, restaurants, hardware stores and home improvement centers, and of course, hobby shops. The more places you place posters, the more exposure your event will receive. See Attachment 3 in the Appendix of this guide for information on how to create print ads and posters plus some examples you can use for inspiration.

## **WORK WITH YOUR LOCAL HOBBY SHOP**

Your local hobby dealers are important people in your plans. At first you might not think so. After all isn't National Model Railroad Month, and the activities you've planned for it, aimed at getting non-modelers into the hobby? And isn't a hobby shop a place for people that are already in the hobby? Yes it is. But most hobby shops also sell items for hobbies other than model railroading. That makes them ideal places to attract people in those other hobbies into ours. Plus, hobby shops often advertise to the general public and you may be able to tie your event into that advertising.

The first thing to remember is **“IT'S WHAT YOU CAN DO FOR THEM THAT WILL TRULY INTEREST THEM”**. Few hobby shop operators are interested in helping when it's a case of them doing it just for you. It's a two-way street. Here are a few ideas to help get the traffic flowing in both directions.

- Invite your hobby dealer to participate in your activities. Perhaps you might offer space to display model railroad wares at your event. If you have a public layout, ask your local dealer for some brochures that you can have to show visitors where they may go to get started in the hobby. Try to include them in your plans whenever possible.
- On numerous occasions, hobby shop dealers have tailored their advertising copy on radio, television and in the newspapers to include a wrap-up of current club and division events. Including your National Model Railroad Month activities in these wrap-ups offers the potential of being a great promotional tie-in for them. The simple trick to gaining publicity support and backing from hobby shops and dealers is to treat them as friends. Make them feel that you have a true interest in their business.
- To add another communications vehicle, obtain their permission to place a display in their store. Perhaps offer to put together a window display. An eye-catching exhibit in the window will promote your event as well as increase their business. Supply them with publicity material for your activities and the NMRA. Have pictures available; the best models you can lay your hands on; tickets or “passes” to your event and plenty of handout schedules detailing your planned activities. **HELP THEIR BUSINESS AND THEY WILL HELP YOURS.**

## SUMMARY

As you can see, public relations and its planning entails a lot of good hard work. But it's all doable if you plan and execute your publicity campaign with care. Prepare a checklist of things to do and people to see. Event chairpersons should work closely with publicity chairpersons in this respect. Follow your checklist and make all your preparations accordingly. Proper and complete planning will ensure a successful event.

And be sure to tell those in your group that are not directly working on public relations or publicity, that they can help by telling their friends and co-workers about what is coming up. Even with the sophisticated communications media available today, word-of-mouth is still a very effective way of spreading the news about your event.

Above all else, remember that the number-one key to successful public relations is personal contact.

Good Luck!!

# APPENDIX

## Attachment 1 – News Release

### News Release

(Date)

(Your Name and Position)

(Division/region identification) of the National Model Railroad Association

(Your Phone number and email address)

#### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

(Division/Region) of the National Model Railroad Association (NMRA), announced today that it will be presenting (Event Name) a special event for area residents in celebration of National Model Railroad Month.

Model railroading is a fun, educational and rewarding hobby for the whole family and on (date), (Division) will show (city/town name) families how to get involved.

-more-

(Event Name) will feature (Event Description)

(Event date, location, and time)

The NMRA was organized in 1935 and now boasts nearly 20,000 members worldwide. The Association has long set the standards for building and displaying model railroads. National and regional conventions and train shows are held annually at various locations around the United States and Canada.

For more information, contact (your name) at (address), (phone number) or by email at (email address). And visit our website at (website address).

-30-

*Note: to help give you a better idea of how this sample press release would look in final form, here it is again with "real" copy replacing the blanks:*

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Division 12, North-South Region, of the National Model Railroad Association (NMRA), announced today that it will be presenting Trainfest 2011, a special event for area residents in celebration of National Model Railroad Month.

Model railroading is a fun, educational and rewarding hobby for the whole family and on November 20, Division 12 will show Yourtown families how to get involved.

Trainfest 2011 will feature working model railroads in many sizes. In addition, seminars on how to get started in the hobby will be presented. Information will also be available on local modeling clubs and NMRA membership.

-more-

Trainfest 2011 will be held on November 20<sup>th</sup> at the Civic Center, Main St. and Railroad Avenue in Yourtown. Doors will open at 10 AM and admission is free.

The NMRA was organized in 1935 and now boasts nearly 20,000 members worldwide. The Association has long set the standards for building and displaying model railroads. National and regional conventions and train shows are held annually at various locations around the United States and Canada.

For more information about Trainfest 2011, contact John Jones, Promotion Director at 313-555-1234 or by email at [jjones@emprovider.com](mailto:jjones@emprovider.com) And visit our website at [www.div12.net](http://www.div12.net).

## **Attachment 2 – Radio Public Service Announcement**

### **Public Service Announcement**

SPONSOR: (Division/Region) National Model Railroad Association

CONTACT: (Your Name and Position) (Phone number & email address)

LENGTH: :30

ANNCR: It's National Model Railroad Month! To celebrate, (Division) of the (Region), National Model Railroad Association presents (Event Name), (Day & Date), at (Location Name & Address). (Event description) That's (Event Name), (Day & Date) at the (Location Name and City). Doors open at (Time). For more information, visit (website address).

*NOTE: To give you a better idea how this PSA would work, here it is again with "real" copy.*

### **Public Service Announcement**

SPONSOR: Division 12, North-South Region, National Model Railroad Association

CONTACT: John Jones, Promotion Director 313-555-1234 [jjones@emprovider.com](mailto:jjones@emprovider.com)

LENGTH: 30

ANNCR: It's National Model Railroad Month! To celebrate, Division 12 of the North-South Region, National Model Railroad Association presents Trainfest 2011; Sunday November 20<sup>th</sup>, at the Civic Center, Main Street and Railroad Avenue, in Yourtown. See operating model railroads. Learn how you and your kids can build one of your own. It's the ideal family hobby! That's Trainfest 2011, Sunday November 20<sup>th</sup> at the Civic Center in Yourtown. Doors open at 10 am. For more information, visit [www.div12.net](http://www.div12.net).

### Attachment 3 – PRINT ADS AND POSTERS

Here are a couple of examples of the kind of print advertising you can do for your National Model Railroad Month event. The black-and-white example is meant to run as an economical small-space ad in newspapers, company newsletters, etc. The larger one, in color, can be used as either a print ad or a poster. Just remember that as an ad this one will probably cost you more to run (if you have to pay for it) due to its size and the fact that it is in color. But you can still print it up and distribute it as a poster at a nominal cost. And you can use either example as handouts, flyers or as a posted item on websites.

We would like to have offered these ads/posters in a form that would have allowed you to modify them directly to fit your needs using the graphics and word processing software you probably already have on your computer. Unfortunately, there are many kinds of software, most with compatibility issues that make creating examples in this way impractical. So just use what you see as a set of ideas for creating your own. Before you get started, though, here are some things to consider.

DIVISION X OF THE NATIONAL MODEL RAILROAD ASSOCIATION PRESENTS

# TRAINFEST 2011

- Operating model railroads in many sizes
- Hands-on demonstrations
- Seminars on building your first model railroad
- Special “training” for kids
- Find out what your old toy train is worth
- Fun for the whole family!



NATIONAL  
MODEL  
RAILROAD MONTH



SUNDAY NOVEMBER 20TH • 10AM  
CIVIC CENTER  
MAIN STREET & RAILROAD AVENUE • YOURTOWN

**DIVISION X of The NORTH-SOUTH REGION  
NATIONAL MODEL RAILROAD ASSOCIATION PRESENTS**

# **TRAINFEST 2011**



**Operating model railroads in many sizes • Hands-on demonstrations  
Seminars on building your first model railroad  
Special “training” for kids • Find out what your old toy train is worth  
Fun for the whole family**



**SUNDAY • NOVEMBER 20th at the CIVIC CENTER  
MAIN STREET & RAILROAD AVENUE • YOURTOWN • DOORS OPEN 10 AM**

**HEADLINE** – Nothing fancy here, just use the name of your event in big type to tell the world what you’re doing. In this case we’ve named it Trainfest 2011, but you’d use your own event name here.

**SUBHEAD-** That’s short for sub-headline, and as the name implies, it’s a headline that’s important but subordinate to your main headline. In this case we’ve used it to identify the division that’s putting on the event. It appears in both examples above the main headline,



however there's no hard and fast rule about that. It could go below the headline as well. It's just a matter of what looks best in your graphic layout.

**TEXT-** or "copy" as its known in advertising and journalism. Again, we're keeping it simple. No paragraphs full of words, just simple sentences, each describing one feature of the event. In this case the sentences describe a typical train show with modular layouts and clinics. Yours may be very different, so be sure to describe the unique features of your event here. Note that each sentence begins with a big dot. In the advertising business that's called a "bullet point" and it serves to add extra graphic punch to the sentences that follow.

**WHEN, WHERE AND HOW MUCH** – As shown in the examples, be sure to include information about the date, time, location, and entrance fee (if any) of your event.

**AVOID JARGON** – Earlier in this guide we warned about using jargon that non-modelers wouldn't understand. One of the sample sentences illustrates this point. It says that one of the features of our mythical event is "operating model railroads in many different sizes." You might be tempted to rewrite that sentence to read, "operating model railroads in many different scales." Don't! Most members of the general public will have no idea what we mean by the term "scales," but they can visualize model trains of different sizes, so use the terms they know.

**TYPE FACES OR FONTS** – Chances are your computer's graphics or word processing software offers you many fonts to choose from. Use only two or three at most as we did in the examples. Using more is distracting to the eye, so use less to keep those eyes focused on your message.

**THE LOGO** - In the Members-Only Promotional Materials section of [www.nmra.org](http://www.nmra.org) (where you downloaded this document from) you will find a special logo created especially for National Model Railroad Month in both color and black-and-white, and in several different formats. Download it in the format that's compatible to your graphics or word processing software and use it as we have in the examples.

**THE PHOTO** - The larger example contains a photo. License is hereby granted for you to use it in your ad or poster in support of National Model Railroad Month. A tiff copy of the photo alone is available separately in the Members-Only Promotional Materials/National Model RR Month materials. See the terms and conditions of use below.

But chances are you'll want to use a photo of your own, perhaps one shot on a module from one of the portable layouts you'll have on display, or from a home layout that will be on tour during your event. Layout photo shooting is beyond the scope of this guide, so just use the best model railroad photographer within your division to take your ad/poster photo. Most every division seems to have at least one!

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