

Hosting a Re-Fashion Show

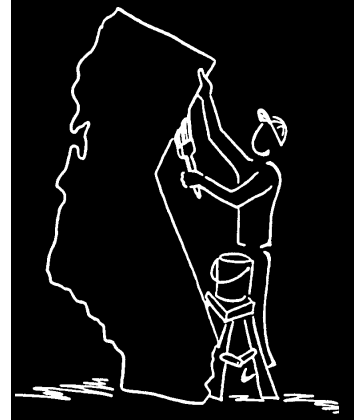
By Marialyce Pedersen, County of Ventura - Solid Waste Management Division

Hosting a Re-Fashion Show is an excellent way to get to know your local thrift, consignment and vintage clothing store operators and to build audience interest in shopping second chance. Often, people at these reuse businesses are not even aware that what they do relates to the recycling and reuse goals of their city or county. When jurisdictions contact them, they are generally very appreciative of an additional opportunity to promote their interests, and establish alliances with the public sector (you?).

How to Launch a . . . Successful Re-Fashion Show

- 1 Obtain or develop a database of local thrift, consignment & vintage clothing stores (SIC codes to enable your search in an electronic database can be obtained from RRaRC. You may also consult your phone book under the above titles).
- 2 Identify venue to host Re-Fashion Show. Introducing a Re-Fashion Show works best when incorporated into other environmental events; for example, Community Fairs, Earth Day Celebrations, and Recycling Conferences or Trade Shows).
- 3 Prepare and send letters to above-identified stores, inviting their participation in your Re-Fashion Show. Stress the promotional benefits for the store and be sure to remind them of how important they are in the waste reduction hierarchy. Let them know that you are a resource for reuse businesses; even if they can't help with the Re-Fashion Show, encourage them to stay in contact with you.
- 4 Invite colleagues, friends and family to accept Re-Modeling assignments. You will need approximately 10 to 12 participants (RRaRC used its E-mail membership list and personal networking activities to contact participants.)
- 5 Begin promoting your event by placing 1/2 sheet flyers at local reuse stores; or place newspaper, television and radio ads, etc. Continue to promote your Re-Fashion Show as necessary until to the actual event. Notify local media via a press release two weeks prior to the event and invite coverage.
- 6 Arrange shopping dates for each Re-Model (preferably in small groups or individually — or even in absentia); or coordinators may elect to simply obtain everyone's size and re-shop for them. Negotiate with the participating thrift or consignment store for a clothing loan or discounted sale arrangements. Some stores may be willing to loan everything at no charge if it is returned in good condition. (They may request a contract to protect themselves.) Others, especially the non-profit thrift stores with very inexpensive items, may prefer that Re-Models or sponsoring groups pay for selected clothing outright.
- 7 When selecting clothing, you will find that two outfits per model is ideal. One casual outfit and one professional or formal outfit is preferable. If possible, complete outfits offer more opportunity to demonstrate a wide variety of items that can be obtained providing a "second chance" for them. These include reused clothing, shoes, accessories, jewelry, and hats, etc. Request that each model launder and iron or dry clean their selected garments prior to the Re-Fashion Show.

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How to Launch a . . . Successful Re-Fashion Show

- 8 Request that each Re-Model arrive at the Re-Fashion Show site approximately one hour prior to showtime. Plan and rehearse a "runway"—possibly just a route through the audience. Re-Models can carry "I'm a Re-Model" flags on thin poles, to identify themselves as they move through a crowd. Choose a few spots for Re-Models to "spin" like real models, to show their outfits on all sides. After everyone has finished modeling, bring everyone back to the stage or along the run-way, so they can take a final bow together.
- 9 MC your event in an upbeat and humorous way. Try to encourage people who haven't ever shopped "second chance" to give it a try. Dispel the stigma that second chance is frumpy, cheap or only for very poor people. Mention brand name items, and their prices so they can be compared to new outfits. Mention thrift, consignment and vintage stores by name as often as possible, so they stick in the minds of the audience members. Your goal is to incite them to check out local reuse stores and shop there.
- 10 After the Re-Fashion Show, devise some means to encourage lingering and networking. Some stores may be willing to donate refreshments. Store operators should definitely be in attendance to solicit new customers. Distribute a list of local thrift, consignment and vintage clothing stores to audience members as they leave. Stores may want to provide coupons and maps to their stores as well.
- 12 If necessary, return all clothes (in good condition, of course). You may need to arrange to pay for some dry cleaning if necessary. If the clothing was purchased, re-models may want to keep them (often they'll pay for them if they like them). Or, you can let the audience know that some of the clothing will be available at a Clothing Swap after the Re-Fashion Show (or elsewhere, later). (See Fact Sheet # 1). If no one wants the clothing, you may then want to donate them to a local charity, or give them back to the original thrift store!
- 13 Continue to work with your local thrift, consignment and vintage clothing stores. Assist them with educating donors about "unhelpful" donations that are not useable, and result in costing the charities money to dispose of (for example, threadbare furniture, and broken electronics, etc). Remember to encourage participation in "Second Chance Week" events in October (see fact sheet #2).
- 14 Keep the reuse spirit alive in your community!

RRaRC Re-use Publications:

RRaRC Fact Sheet #1- Hosting a Clothing Swap!

by: Portia Sinnott, Waste Reduction Project/MS+

RRaRC Fact Sheet #2 - Second Chance Week: October 21-29,2000

by: Leif Christiansen, Local Government Commission

RRaRC Fact Sheet #3 - Hosting a Re-Fashion Show

by: Marialyce Pederson, Ventura County - Solid Waste Management Division

RRaRC Fact Sheet #4 - What is Deconstruction?

by: Susan Kinsella, Susan Kinsella & Associates

Please acknowledge RRaRC when you reprint any of the above fact sheets.