



PRACTICAL TOOLS FOR PARKS AND RECREATION

TRIED AND TRUE
PUBLIC RELATIONS
AND
PROMOTIONAL TOOLS

FOR PARK AND RECREATION PROVIDERS

PARK AND RECREATIONAL TECHNICAL SERVICES
PLANNING DIVISION
CALIFORNIA STATE PARKS



JULY 2007

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PREFACE

California State Parks' Planning Division provides technical assistance on a wide variety of subjects for all local, regional, and statewide park and recreation providers, including surveys, guidebooks, articles, workshops, and studies. These studies range in scope from broad park and recreation issues of statewide significance, to matters involving how an organization in California will cope with change.

The Division has published a variety of user-friendly publications on management assistance that park and recreation providers may find helpful. The following publications are available on the California State Parks Web site at www.parks.ca.gov/planning

- *CPRS Conference 2007 – Crafting a New Benefit Assessment*, March 2007
- *Land Conservation Tools: The Effective Use of Agricultural Conservation Easements and the Williamson Act*, June 2006
- *The Gift of Time: Effective Volunteer Program Management for Local Park and Recreation Agencies*, March 2006
- *Park and Recreation Trends in California*, May 2005
- *Innovative Practices: Case Studies*, October 2004
- *Park and Recreation Professionals Glossary*, July 2004
- *Directory of Grant Funding Sources for California Park and Recreation Providers*, March 2004
- *Getting a Grip on Grants: A How-To Guide for Park and Recreation Providers*, February 2004
- *Paying For Parks: An Overview of Fiscal Resources for Local Park and Recreation Agencies*, 2003
- *Educating Trail Users: Advice for Planning Interpretive Trail Signs and Exhibits*, August 2002

INTRODUCTION

“Parks are first in everyone’s heart, but last in their wallet. Effective communication and a healthy media relationship allows for more of the public to see parks for what they really are — essential places in everyone’s community.”

Rusty Areias, Director, California State Parks, 2002

The purpose of this publication is to provide examples and ideas for strategic communications planning, public relations, and marketing that can move park and recreation professionals and organizations forward in today’s competitive 24/7 media market.

In order to successfully compete, it is essential for park and recreation organizations and staff to have their message heard. This recognition is an advantage, whether it is for advocacy, fundraising, increasing visitor numbers and volunteer community involvement or just getting an event published in the local newspaper calendar. It is critical to reach today’s information culture with compelling messages - messages that do not get lost in the mass of images and voices consumers are exposed to every day.

A savvy media relations person can develop effective roll-out strategies for controversial, groundbreaking proposals and shape stories on hotly-debated issues. Whether working at the grass-roots or at the highest level of management at a respected, non-profit park and recreation organization -- there comes a time when having the skills to serve as a spokesperson for your park and recreation organization becomes an absolute necessity.

Sometimes an organization is lucky enough to have a key staff person, board member or program director with a proven track record in strategic communications planning, public relations, public education, events, public affairs, marketing and research, creative appeal and media relations. However, many park and recreation organizations do not have the funds or ability to dedicate a staff person to these responsibilities. That is where this publication comes in - to help you develop the skills needed to fill this role.

Chapter 1: STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS PLANNING

“If you have ideas, you have the main asset you need, and there isn't any limit to what you can do with your business and your life. Ideas are any man's greatest asset.”
Harvey S. Firestone

Getting your message out is the backbone of any activity or program and vital to the success of an organization. A comprehensive strategic communications plan for creative campaigns, events, and day-to-day public relations that work within and outside of an organization is absolutely critical. Organizations have a tendency to run toward whatever is hot at any given time, even when it is not in their best interest. Without a focus and strategic direction, organizations will become a part of someone else's plan and will start reacting to others' issues, which can be time consuming and deadly.

Identify Your Mission

When preparing a strategic communications plan it is necessary to identify the mission, vision and goals of the organization. The mission statement reflects the vision, values and culture of the organization. Commitment to the mission statement establishes a standard that represents the organization's commitment to its vision. The credibility of the statement may speak to its deeply held commitment to the public.

Sample mission statements:



parks, recreation & marine

Mission of the City of Long Beach Parks, Recreation & Marine:
We create community and enhance the quality of life in Long Beach through people, places, programs, and partnerships.



OUTWARD BOUND

Changing Lives
Building Teams
Transforming Schools



Outward Bound's Mission:
Our Mission is to inspire character development and self-discovery in people of all ages and walks of life through challenge and adventure, and to impel them to achieve more than they ever thought possible, to show compassion for others and to actively engage in creating a better world.



California State Parks Mission:

To provide for the health, inspiration and education of the people of California by helping to preserve the state's extraordinary biological diversity, protecting its most valued natural and cultural resources, and creating opportunities for high-quality outdoor recreation.



County of Los Angeles Department of Parks and Recreation Healthy Parks Program Mission:

Creating healthy communities through people, parks and programs by offering family-oriented and culturally informed, health, nutrition, exercise programs, and educational opportunities that work together to improve the quality of life for all Los Angeles Country residents.



The California Park & Recreation Society provides the leadership to advance the positive impact and value of the profession on society.

Develop a message that is connected to your mission, a short phrase that you want to use to describe your issue or product and use it when you talk with reporters (for example: "parks are healthy places to play"). Develop three or four short "message points" for spokespeople to choose from when talking to the press. Include basic facts about your issues/group and draw from public opinion data any messages that resonate with your target audiences. Review the message points before media appearances or interviews.

Strategies and Tactics

Time and budget must work together. There are more ideas and strategies than there are money, staff resources, and time to make them possible. Money is always being closely watched and organizations are forced to look at everything. Be realistic and run the most efficient strategies that earn maximum results. Determine what resources you will need to carry out your communications plan. Be specific in terms of staff, budget, equipment, consultants and volunteers. Develop a realistic budget that includes staff

time, as well as outside services (graphic design, Web management, media training, etc.) Brainstorm with other staff. Determine what you want to accomplish with your media plan. Use the outlets and formats that your research shows are most likely to reach your target audience.

➤ *Identify Your Audience*

The primary targeted audience for public relations include:

- Stakeholders
 - Adults (further segmented into seniors, women with small children, etc)
 - Youth
 - Ethnic communities
 - Faith based community
- Media - members of local, regional, state, and national press organizations
- The recreation industry
- Employees
- Government – federal, state, and local representatives and legislators
- Others in the chain for services
- Partners - companies or groups that are considered allies of the organization such as tourism industry, chamber of commerce, fitness clubs, swim clubs, etc.
- Non-profit organizations such as the YMCA and youth groups
- For-profit organizations such as KOA campgrounds, etc.

With the target audiences identified, use research to learn who and what influences each audience to determine the best way to reach them. For example:

- Where do they get their information?
- What media do they watch or listen to?
- What do they read?
- Who do they respect?
- Who do they trust and listen to?

The answers to these questions will help you identify and list the media outlets you want to cultivate. If a local non-English radio station is most popular among the age group you want to attract, contact that station and ask about coverage for your events. If a faith-based group is having a carnival that allows other organizations to set up booths or tables, take the opportunity to promote your programs at the event.

➤ *Devise a Strategy for Positive Media Coverage*¹

Develop a calendar of media events to highlight your group's projects, such as the release of a report, timed with ready-made news hooks like International Women's Day or Arbor Day. Include information on which reporters you will target. Cultivate relationships with members of the press, suggesting ideas for feature stories, "expert" responses to breaking news or guests for their shows. Write and submit opinion

¹ "Communications Plan Quick Tips," www.ccmc.org/mediatools.htm

editorials (aka 'op-ed) or columns to newspapers and magazines. Be on the look-out for creative opportunities to link your group to cultural events, such as TV shows (an episode might cover your issue) and movies.

➤ *Attract Editorial Endorsements and Columnist Support*

Set up meetings with editorial boards of local papers to encourage them to state an opinion on your issues. Send columnists ideas for op-ed pieces. Encourage local newspapers and TV stations to endorse walk-a-thons and other events that bring publicity and funding to your issue.

Set Goals

Identify goals that are realistic and achievable. Try to base the goals on available research to give you a baseline to help measure results. The following sample goals include measurable outcomes:

Goal 1: Enhance visibility of agency among Latinos

- Raise Latino attendance or membership at our facilities by 15% within six months from current baseline of ___X#_____
- Garner quarterly media coverage in the local Latino newspaper or television station regarding our agency's positive impact and services to the Latino community from the current baseline of ___X#_____

Goal 2: Encourage financial contributions for a capital campaign to purchase XYZ property

- Solicit contributions from different sectors of the community – private, non-profit, individual, corporate – with targeted printed materials
- Identify a certain amount of money raised as 'successful,' and publicize results

Goal 3: Generate positive media coverage of the agency following negative news coverage over a community dispute such as about the use of land at a local park for dogs.

- Garner quarterly coverage on collaborative efforts to resolve the dog vs. people conflict.
- Secure coverage of programs that benefit the entire community from the current baseline of ___X#_____

Your Communications Plan should now include the primary message you want to convey to the media and public, a comprehensive media contact list, a calendar of media opportunities, and realistic goals. Using this plan you can tailor media contacts to match the specific event or activity you are promoting.

Polish Your Plan and Your Skills

➤ *Build Media Skills*

Provide media and interview training for your spokespeople (more in Chapter 3). Make sure they practice before a video camera, honing their message and image into a persuasive, articulate presentation. Provide media-readiness and message training for staff and board members so they can be strong advocates for your group or recreation program. Develop profiles of individuals willing to share their stories with the press – have guidelines to protect their privacy and make sure they have media training beforehand.

➤ *Develop a Crisis Control Plan*

Be prepared for a sudden media backlash or controversy, no matter how moderate your cause, group, and issues are. Include crisis control in your communications plan (more in Chapter 3). Put a crisis coordination team in place and create a plan to respond. These precautionary steps will let you get control of events before they control you.

➤ *Include Evaluation Methods*

Make sure your communications plan includes mechanisms to evaluate your media activities and goals. Evaluation methods might include: tracking shifts in public opinion or government policies; measuring increases in membership, funding or visibility; or improving institutional capacity. This topic will be covered more thoroughly in Chapter 6.

➤ *Keep Your Plan Flexible*

The best communications plan will always need adjustment based on what works for your organization. The key is to be flexible and creative, willing to make changes quickly as news coverage changes. If you plan a news conference on the day of a natural disaster, expect little or no coverage unless you are directly involved in the cleanup activities. By contrast, slow news days can produce great coverage for organizations who happen to be fully prepared at the right place and time. Remember that good media coverage is earned and must be ongoing. ...

You have the opportunity, the clout, the ability, and the resources to reach the media and achieve your goals. Keep at it. Do not stop. When your communications plan does take off, record successful techniques for the future. Constantly analyze your efforts. Figure out why they worked, or just as important, why they did not. And remember, review, revise, and repeat.²

² Bonk, Griggs and Tynes, pp. 161-162, 163.

CHAPTER 2: Public Relations Basics

“Some are born great, some achieve greatness, and some hire public relations officers.” Daniel J. Boorstein

Who, What, When, Where, Why and How

Every media source is required to set aside time for community service. To make the most of your opportunity to get your program or project listed, the following public relations (PR) basics will help. Whether the need is to promote, notify, announce, invite, or get an event, park and recreation program, fund raising project, park dedication, and the like listed in the local paper’s calendar section or announced on the radio – make sure all the questions are answered: who, what, when, where, why and how. These are the questions all journalists are taught to answer before they are set loose on the streets. Think about these questions and your unique answers³:

Who

- Who are you or your entity in the community?
- Did you ever make news that people still remember, such as a rescue or a citation for community achievement?
- Who are you in your professional community?
- Have you done anything that made industry news?
- Who stands to benefit from what you have to say in interviews?
- Did anyone live, die, or make news because they did what you are selling or advocating?
- Who works with you and are they newsworthy in any way?

What

- What do you do?
- What event, program, park or project are you promoting, if any?
- What is the primary idea or product you are selling?
- What can someone learn from your entity or your event?
- What are the trends that will shape the future of your work?
- What is the origin of your work?
- What will the visitor experience when they visit your event?

When

- When does your product or event become effective?
- When can your audience see you or your product?
- When does the story of your product or idea begin?
- If your audience does what you tell them to do, when can they expect a change?
- When should a story about you run – or does it matter?
- When does your offer expire and, if it does, when will it be available again?

³ Parkhurst, How to Get Publicity, pp. 27-29

Where

- Where can your idea or product be seen?
- Where is your project going to be most effective?
- Where is the local tie-in or distributor for your product or idea?
- Where is your event going to be held?
- Are there any additional local people or places that stand to benefit from what you do? If so, where are they?

Why

- Why do you do what you do?
- Why should anyone else do what you do?
- Why did you decide to pursue this line of thinking?
- Why do any of us need to learn more about it?
- Why won't we be better off doing it another way?
- Why should your audience listen to you above any other expert in your field?
- Why did you decide to take your ideas to the public through publicity appearances?

How

- How does it work?
- How do people get it?
- How easy is it for the average viewer in the audience to use?
- How long does it last?
- How good is it?
- How long does it take to get there?

Now that you have your answers, you need to determine the best tools to get your story and product before the public.

Basic PR Tools

➤ *Word-of-mouth*

There is no substitute for the most powerful marketing tool, word-of-mouth. Word-of-mouth is any unofficial form of communication your agency can use to get the message out about your services. If you get people talking about your park and recreation agency, you have successful word-of-mouth public relations. It is free and it is effective. You can promote word-of-mouth by encouraging your visitors and others in the community to share their experiences with your agency.

Generally, people tell around five other people about their experiences. People most often hear about places and experiences from their friends, co-workers, and relatives. Because they share similar interests and value these opinions, they are considered credible. These people have no association with the agency; therefore they are considered an unbiased source of information. For example, if your neighbor participated in a swimming class at your park and recreation agency and had a great

time, she will share that experience with you and you will feel you are knowledgeable about the type of services you can expect.

How to generate word-of-mouth dialog:

- Keep track of customer activity. Find out how many people view the organization's website each month. Conduct surveys on how they found out about the organization's programs and facilities. Offer discounts as a reward for those who reveal their source of recommendation.
- Contact local community opinion leaders and offer them the opportunity to be involved.
- Encourage group membership options; have a 'tell-a-friend' discount.
- Identify customers that sent letters of praise and acknowledge them for taking the time to say thanks. Invite them back for more involvement. Ask to use their comments and their names for an upcoming flyer or brochure endorsing your project or program.
- Host special events to stimulate customers' interests further. Continue to inform those customers of services through e-mail, newsletters.
- Deal with customer complaints in a quiet and efficient manner. Addressing a complaint can turn that person into a supporter who will tell others. Not addressing it means not only the risk of losing that customer but others they may communicate with in the future. If complaints are encouraged, the organization has the chance to remedy legitimate complaints and win back a customer who may then make positive reports to others, enhancing good will. Research has found that even if the complaint is not fully settled to the consumer's satisfaction, they are still more likely to come back than if a complaint is not made, or recognized.
- Use the Internet to encourage word of mouth by placing phrases in e-mails or on the web: "Send this page to a friend," "If you think your friend might be interested in this, please e-mail them!"
- Train staff to record satisfied or dissatisfied customers/incidents and track the information on a daily log or diary. Have customers record their experiences. For example, in the backcountry huts in the New Zealand National parkland, visitors are encouraged to write down notes and jot lists of needed improvements.
- Create positive first and last impressions. What is the first thing and the last thing visitors see?
- Make the visitors' experience memorable. Give them something to talk to their friends about; e.g. souvenirs, name entertainment, fireworks, courteous staff, photo opportunities, etc.

➤ *Press Release*

The terms press, news, and media release are often used interchangeably, however, press release generally means print media such as newspapers, while media or news release might include all news media – from print to electronic (radio, TV, Web) broadcasts. A press release is the most commonly used format and term.

A press release is one of the primary PR vehicles to communicate news and information to the media. Today, journalists receive a tremendous volume of press releases, and many often end up in the trash. In order to ensure your press release is read you must have a press release that: 1) is received via the preferred medium (does the journalist prefer e-mail, fax or hardcopy?), and 2) captures the journalist's attention with a good newsworthy lead-in title or topic.

Press Release Writing Tips

Be Newsworthy. For an announcement to be considered newsworthy it must have a broad, general interest to the target audience and a strong news angle (e.g., material information, new development, drama, human interest, local angle, consequence, etc.). In addition, your release needs to be written in a journalistic, rather than marketing style. It should be objectively written as though a reporter were writing the story for you. Most importantly, your release needs to "inform" people, NOT just sell them something.

Headline Formats. In most cases your headline is the first thing an editor sees when reviewing your release. An effective headline can make the difference between an editor covering your story or hitting the delete button. To create an effective headline consider the following points:

- Limit your headline to no more than one line. Many newsrooms have a limit on how many characters they can receive in a headline and their systems are programmed to reject releases that exceed this limit.
- The headline should provide an editor with a tantalizing snapshot of what the news release is about. This is critical as many journalists view releases over their wire system by headline only, then pick and choose when they want to view the full text of the release.
- The headline should include the name of the company issuing the release.
- Do not include the terms "Company," "Incorporated" or "Limited" or their abbreviations unless they are necessary to clearly identify the organization, i.e. Tandy Corporation vs. Tandy Brands.
- Do not use exclamation points or dollar signs.
- Attribute all potentially critical, controversial, or judgmental statements to a specific, quotable individual.

Writing Style Requirements. Writing a professional and effective news release can be difficult. Here are a few guidelines to consider when crafting your release:

- Get to the point quickly and back it up with specific quotes and evidence.
- Use proper grammar and punctuation. Check for typos, and do not just rely on spell check!
- Address who, what, when, where, why and how in the news release.
- Double check phone numbers and URLs.
- Read your release out loud to see if it makes sense.
- Include quotes from an official in the organization to convey opinion or affiliation.
- Don't forget to put your contact name, release date, dateline, web site URL and phone number in your release. Also make sure you are available for phone calls after sending the release out.
- Your release should be written objectively, as if the writer has no affiliation with the company.
- Do not use pronouns such as I, we, us, our, your, etc. except in direct quotes. Write in the third person.
- Do not use egotistical statements or hype (i.e. 'we make the best widgets East of the Rockies'), but do inform the reader of your status in the park and recreation field.
- Always include standard boilerplate information about your agency in the last paragraph. The headline for this section should read "About (insert your company's name here)."

Length requirements. Your release should be concise and to the point. You should be able to convey your message in two pages or less. Releases that are less than 50 words in length tend to be advertisements and cannot be run as a news release. "A release is a miniature news article and should conform to the journalistic tradition of saying as much as possible in the shortest space with the plainest language."⁴

Use bullet points sparingly.

⁴ Op.Cit, p. 46.

Sample Press Release Template:

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

(Date of Release)

CONTACT: (Name)

(Phone Number)

ATTENTION GRABBING HEADLINE: KEEP IT SHORT, ALL CAPITAL LETTERS AND CENTERED

*Subtitle to further expand on headline if needed
(Remember who, what, where, when, why and how)*

Lead Paragraph: Opening should be compelling and make the reader want to continue. Most important information always at the top: What is happening, who is involved, where and when.

2nd Paragraph: Quote from an expert involved, director, top management or elected official that emphasizes significant information.

3rd Paragraph: Why is this information significant and newsworthy? The more localized the greater chance of being used by newspapers.

4th + Paragraph: Details of the event and an opportunity to add additional information on the organization, event, program or activities or issue being announced...

Final Paragraph: One sentence description of everyone involved, including partners/sponsors.

Try to keep your release 1 to 1 1/2 pages.

MORE (if release goes to a second page)

or -30- (to indicate end)



CALENDAR LISTING

City of Los Angeles Department of Recreation and Parks

Public Information Division 1200 W. 7th St., Suite 700 Los Angeles, CA 90017 (213) 928-9200 / fax: (213) 928-9288

May 24, 2007

MEDIA CONTACT(S)

Harvey Drut: (213) 928-9296, or cell, (323) 816-6711

Jane Kolb: (213) 928-9294, or cell, (323) 816-6712

Cabrillo Marine Aquarium: (310) 548-7562

KIDS CAN "SLEEP WITH THE FISHES"

Friday, June 22, 2007 at 7:00 p.m. – Saturday, June 23, 2007 at 8:00 a.m.

SAN PEDRO – Cabrillo Marine Aquarium, a City of Los Angeles Department of Recreation and Parks facility located at 3720 Stephen M. White Dr. in San Pedro, will hold the first of three "Sleep with the Fishes" overnight adventures for students in grades 3-6 from 7:00 p.m. on Friday, June 22, to 8:00 a.m. on Saturday, June 23, 2007.

Through a variety of fun activities to learn more about nocturnal animals of the sea and shore, including grunion, sharks, and plankton, kids will be able to get answers to such questions as: What glows in the dark? Who trawls the deep for food at night? What are the slimiest ocean animals?

There will also be games, and participants will have an opportunity to complete take-home projects. Breakfast and snacks will be provided – children will need to bring a sleeping bag, pillow, etc., and a sense of curiosity and wonder. The program will also be offered July 20-21 and August 17-18.

The cost is \$35 per child (\$31 for members of Friends of Cabrillo Marine Aquarium). Reservations are recommended as space is limited. For more information, call the aquarium at (310) 548-7562, or go to www.cabrilloaq.org.

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For more information about Department of Recreation and Parks events, activities, services, programs, and facilities, go to www.laparks.org, or call 1-888-LA PARKS (527-2757).

Use of Quotations. Good quotes can get the reader's attention. Pithy quotes in the press release allow the organization to stay on message and helps ensure accuracy. Reporters make quotes a building block that moves the story forward.

This quote answers the question, stays on message, expresses the organization's values and creates a good story:

Sample Question: "What is it about this acquisition that makes it appealing to your organization?"

Sample Quote: "This public/private partnership stands as testament to the vision of people working together today to preserve lands for the future generations of tomorrow."

Sample Press Release with Quote:

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
06/03/2004**

**Statement by Secretary Chrisman Regarding Tentative
Agreement with Hearst Corporation on Terms of
Conservation Transaction on Hearst Ranch**

The California Resources Agency, the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB), California Coastal Conservancy, California State Parks, American Land Conservancy and the California Rangeland Trust have reached tentative agreement with the Hearst Corporation on the terms of a conservation transaction on the 82,000-acre Hearst Ranch located in San Luis Obispo County.

"The State and the Hearst Corporation have come a long way in reaching agreement on the key issues. Concluding this multifaceted transaction will involve significant public process, including meetings of the Wildlife Conservation Board and the State Coastal Conservancy. Once consummated, I believe all Californians will be well served by our efforts to preserve this spectacular working landscape as envisioned by William Randolph Hearst nearly a century ago," said Mike Chrisman, Secretary for Resources.

The transaction includes the transfer of coastal properties on the Ranch to State Parks for public access and a conservation easement that will preserve the ecological and agricultural values of the property. The parties to the transaction will begin preparing the final legal documents for presentation to their respective boards later this summer. These documents, along with the details of the proposed transaction, will be released to the public in advance of all public meetings involving the Hearst proposal. As public agencies, WCB and Coastal Conservancy will involve the public's participation prior to final action by their boards.

➤ *Media Alerts or Advisories*

A media alert or advisory is used to inform the media about a press conference or special event. It is a simple, one page "Who, What, When, Where, Why, and How" document. It is often sent to the press one week (or a few days) in advance and serves as an invitation for press to attend the event.

Sample Media Advisory

FOR PLANNING PURPOSES ONLY (Date of Advisory)	CONTACT: (Name) (Phone number) (e-mail address)
MEDIA ADVISORY RESOURCES AGENCY SALTON SEA COMMITTEE INAUGURAL MEETING SET FOR JANUARY 20, 2004	
<p>SACRAMENTO – California Secretary for Resources Mike Chrisman today announced the inaugural meeting of the Resources Agency Salton Sea Advisory Committee, bringing together representatives of local, state and federal agencies, and nonprofit organizations to cooperate on efforts to restore the Salton Sea ecosystem.</p>	
WHO:	Secretary for Resources Mike Chrisman Sea Advisory Committee Members
WHAT:	Inaugural Meeting of the Salton Sea Advisory Committee
WHERE:	California Museum for History, Women and the Arts Large Classroom 1020 O Street Sacramento, CA
WHEN:	Tuesday, January 20, 2004, 10 a.m. ###

➤ *Press Kits*

Press or media kits are hard copy folders with press releases, and other materials for press conferences and events. A press kit in a folder with the organization's logo is sharp and professional looking and is a great idea for all written material.

A press kit is also an opportunity to provide information and collected articles to introduce your organization or services to the public. It is important that the organization's public relations representative always has material available to give background information to necessary contacts.

Press kits are important as a means to initiate communication between an organization and the media, investors, donors, clients and/or employees. Media kits can help gain positive media coverage and exposure, attract prospective investors and donors, or promote upcoming events.

Things to include in a press kit:

- Press releases
- Cover letters

- Background, Frequently Asked Questions, or fact sheets on organization that could include website address, history, and statistics (size of park, visitor numbers, special features, overview of important projects)
- Lists of sponsors and donors
- Public relations contact person (include business card)
- Bios of staff and/or board members
- Photographs (8x10 or 5x7 black & white or color glossy): photo of a new facility, or current headshot of director or senior staff
- Calendar of programs or special events
- Copies of noteworthy articles and editorials
- Information can also be provided on a disk or CD

Where do you distribute press kits?

- Upon request from reporters, editors, potential donors and board members
- Have a media kit prepared for all of the attendees at press conferences
- Bring a few along to any media interview
- Send off a kit ahead of time when pitching a specific story to a reporter
- You may want to bring current kits to board meetings
- Do not forget to follow up with contacts when sending out media kits! This will insure they have received them and allow an opportunity for them to ask any questions

Other items to consider including:

- Map of park
- Agency Annual Report
- Program brochure
- Facility brochure
- Additional photographs
- Aerial photos
- Directions to event
- Parking pass (if needed)
- Press pass (if needed)

Sample Cover Letter:

Latino Media Kit

Dear Editor,

The Census 2000 figures show that Latinos are the largest minority group in the state. Because of this, it is imperative that the media not only be inclusive of the Latino community, but also cover it in all of its diversity.

We encourage you to run stories and profiles about the Latino community. We have developed a resource kit in partnership with several Latino organizations around the state.

We recognize the contributions of the Latino community and have begun to work in Spanish language and Latino media. We held media symposiums that discussed images of Latinos.

We encourage you to use this media resource kit to develop stories about the Latino community, and hope that the information will serve as a resource in your research throughout the year and beyond.

If you should have any questions about issues and events in the Latino community, please do not hesitate to call any of the people on the enclosed media contact list. For specific questions about the media resource kit, please contact _____, at (____) _____, or by e-mail at _____.

➤ *Backgrounder and Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)*

A backgrounder is a one or two page (sometimes longer) document that tells an organization's unique story. It features key information - a brief history, core products and services, industry information and executive staff. It should be written in a factual, informative way that engages the press without being "hype".

Frequently Asked Questions documents are created to answer many general questions about an organization's mission, vision, goals, business-related questions, and/or questions about a particular product or service. FAQ's should be made available to the public, and are often posted on corporate web sites. The main purpose of FAQ documents is to answer many of the questions a potential customer, partner, investor, media contact or even employee may have.

➤ *Biography ("bio")*

A biography ("bio") is a brief one page document profiling a member of the company's executive team or senior management. It is essential the bio is updated regularly and includes the executive's correct name, title and general area of responsibility for the company. The format should utilize the "news paragraph" style, listing the most recent information first and least-recent information (e.g. academic degree or affiliation) last.

Sample Biography:

MIKE CHRISMAN

Secretary for Resources

Date: _____

Phone: _____

Contact: _____

E-mail: _____



A fourth generation Californian and San Joaquin Valley resident, Mike Chrisman was named California Secretary for Resources by Governor Schwarzenegger in November 2003. As a member of the governor's cabinet, Secretary Chrisman serves as his chief advisor on issues related to the states' natural, historic, and cultural resources.

In leading the Resources Agency, Secretary Chrisman oversees policies, activities, and a budget of \$6.4 billion and 16,000 employees in 25 departments, commissions, boards and conservancies. The issues run the natural resources gamut from conservation, water, fish and game, forestry, parks, energy, coastal, marine and landscape.

Prior to his appointment Secretary Chrisman served as Region Manager for Southern California Edison Company from 1996 to 2003. There he managed all phases of company and customer business, and the political and civic activities in Edison's San Joaquin Valley service area. He served as Undersecretary for the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) from 1994 to 1996 during which time he provided leadership in the development and implementation of sound policy for the state's agricultural industry and consumers. Secretary Chrisman's lifelong commitment to family ranching proved invaluable in the development of policies to sustain the Central Valley's economy.

In 1997, Governor Pete Wilson appointed Secretary Chrisman to the California Fish and Game Commission, where he also served as Chairman of the Wildlife Conservation Board. From 1991 to 1994 he served at the Resources Agency as Deputy Secretary for Operations and Legislation in the Wilson Administration. He was staff director of the Assembly Republican Caucus in 1991, advising members of the Legislature on environmental, water and agriculture issues. From 1986 to 1991, Secretary Chrisman served as Chief of Staff to former Assemblyman Bill Jones, managing the Central Valley member's State Capitol and district offices and specializing in agriculture, water and environmental issues.

Throughout his career, Secretary Chrisman has been known as the 'go to' person to facilitate solutions for local and regional challenges. Often behind the scenes, he has been responsible for incalculable positive impacts throughout the region in many far-reaching ways. His commitment to the agriculture industry combined with his unwavering passion for protecting the state's natural resources, has established the foundation from which he has been able to provide bold and compassionate environmental leadership.

Secretary Chrisman holds a Master of Science degree in Agricultural Education and a Bachelor of Science degree in Agronomy and Plant Science from the University of Arizona. He is an owner and partner of Visalia's Chrisman Ranches, a family ranching and farming business in Tulare County.

He and his wife Barbara have two children and five grandchildren.

➤ *Media Contact List*

It is important to keep an accurate, up-to-date database of influential media. Any information sent to a publication needs to be addressed to a specific journalist or editor; otherwise it will likely be discarded. Public relations are based on relationship building with the media, so it is important not only to keep accurate records, but to actually get to know the key journalists and media that cover your company or industry.

Sample Media Contact List:

Publication/Media The City Times
Media Type Newspaper
First Sue
Last Smith
Title/Beat Editor/Workplace
Address 92 5th Street, LA, CA 98002
Phone 555/914-6969
Fax 555/914-6900
E-mail Sues@ct.com
Comments Best to contact Sue via e-mail

Publication/Media KING TV
Media Type Broadcast TV
First John
Last Apple
Title/Beat Producer
Address 3400 7th St., City, ST. Zip
Phone 555/404-8974
Fax 555/212-6444
E-mail John@ktv.com
Comments John works the weekend shift

➤ *Press Conferences/Briefings/Tours*

A press conference is a formal event held by an organization that members of the press are invited to cover. Press conferences are used to communicate an important, newsworthy announcement and may include 50-100 members of the press. The key element of any press conference is the announcement itself. It must be significant enough to attract press, and newsworthy enough to secure actual coverage of the event. The location of a press conference is also critical – it must be a large enough room to allow for a large press contingent, camera equipment and it must be "well

wired" with numerous power outlets and microphones to ensure press can ask questions, take photographs and film the event easily. Setting up a press conference on site for a park opening, or to showcase new land annexation, involves a different set of logistics. Renting or bringing in truckloads of folding chairs, a portable stage, microphones, and electrical generators should be added to your list of logistics.

News briefings, on the other hand, are more informal and may only include a handful of journalists. The goal of a news briefing is to inform the press about a general strategy, introduce them to a new product, solicit their feedback on a particular program, or announce the appointment of a new district administrator.

A press tour is designed to take a particular announcement or program "on the road" to key press. Companies arrange 1:1 or group meetings with journalists and then conduct the interviews in their offices or at a designated location. Most often, press tours are designed by location (e.g., Northern California and Southern California) to maximize travel time. A tour would be an appropriate strategy to show the media a new development, or the need for repairs on well used facilities.

Things to consider when making a decision to hold a press conference:

- It is important to consider if simply sending out a press release is sufficient, or if a press conference is really necessary. Is it newsworthy? Are there facts and information to reveal, like a high profile event or exciting new service? Calling a press conference for routine issues or to get free publicity may damage credibility and could affect turnout at future events, so make sure press conferences are held only if absolutely necessary.
- Press conferences provide a forum to address a group of reporters at the same time.
- Assign a key representative with good public speaking skills to make an announcement. This representative could be a communications specialist, a director, or anyone else on the agency's staff trained to handle high level media relations. It is also a good idea to have a prominent community member speak at the press conference. Do you have good speakers? For example, if announcing a new community center it would be great to have the mayor or local council member attend and make a statement at the press conference.
- Who to invite: Media, board members, key staff, key community members, non-profit partners, chamber of commerce, local and state leaders, if applicable.

Press Conference Logistics:

- Schedule the press conference for the morning if possible. This gives reporters time to file their stories
- Make sure to find adequate space to hold all the media and community members
- Facility chosen has sufficient parking for all attendees
- Facility may have a stage/display area for speakers/podium
- A banner can be set up behind the podium for branding as signage and is always a valuable promotional tool
- Adequate seating and space for media and camera equipment

- Staff for the event can be assigned roles as emcee, speakers, and greeters to hand out press kits
- E-mail/Fax media alert and directions a few days in advance and for a good media turnout, call individual reporters and editors to pitch the event
- Prep speakers for press questions before the event to make sure they are prepared
- Rehearse the presentation and check equipment for all technical problems and make sure all the correct equipment is set up and ready to go
- Set up a sign-in table near the entrance for a record of all the attendees
- Have enough press kits pre-stuffed with current press release and have extras available
- Consider having water, coffee, soda or food available if early morning
- Set clear objectives and keep everything on track. Keep announcements simple so as not to confuse the reporters and make sure there is one clear message theme
- Create a checklist of key tasks and details, including who is responsible for each item

➤ *Letters-to-the-Editor, Opinion-Editorials (op-ed)*

Another way to use newspapers to promote an organization or initiative and to get an announcement out is to write letters to the editor. Opinion pieces and editorials or Op-Eds signed by top management or board members are very useful.

Sample Op-Ed:

Guest Column: It's no longer business as usual; Real progress must be made to save the Delta

Stockton Record – 2/18/07

By Mike Chrisman, California Secretary for Resources, Visalia

The Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta touches the life of every Californian every day.

It supports vital energy, transportation, communications and water facilities and important agricultural, recreational and cultural resources.

It's also in peril.

Formed by the Sacramento and San Joaquin rivers, the Delta is truly one of the state's - and the nation's - great natural treasures.

It's home to 700 native species of plants, fish and animals. It's crossed by hundreds of gas lines, six highways, five high-voltage lines and three railroads.

It's the hub of the state's major water supply systems.

The Delta is held together by 1,100 miles of fragile levees. The threat of flooding exists throughout the year, not just during the winter storm season.

Many of the Delta's islands now lie below sea level, sinking lower every time a plow passes and the peat soil is carried away on the Delta breeze.

Californians made an investment on Nov. 7 to repair levees and improve flood protection, supporting the first phase of Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger's Strategic Growth Plan.

This will provide \$4 billion to keep Californians safe from flood and to protect habitat and water supply.

I'm working with the governor on a second phase of this important plan.

If placed on the ballot, voters will have the opportunity to allocate nearly \$6 billion to enhance the Delta's sustainability, build new water reservoirs, increase the state's water supply and fund water conservation efforts.

There's a real, pressing need for more investment.

In addition to flood risk, the Delta faces significant changes to its ecosystem. The number and variety of fish have declined dramatically over the past five years.

The desire for affordable housing close to urban centers means increased development is coming - changing the character of this unique and historic place.

In order to address the Delta's needs, the governor signed an executive order creating the Delta Vision plan.

Last week, he issued this challenge to the newly formed Delta Vision Blue Ribbon Task Force: develop a durable vision for sustainable management of the Delta and a strategic plan for its implementation.

This task is no small undertaking. Competing interests have battled over the Delta's resources for decades.

The governor carefully chose the seven individuals who will work during the next 18 months, under the leadership of Chairman Phil Isenberg, to ensure they make a significant difference.

In addition, a 40-member group of Delta stakeholders soon will be named.

They also will play an integral role in representing the San Joaquin Valley's interests statewide.

Californians have learned volumes about the Delta over the past several decades.

What we know today, from the impact of global climate change to moving water through the Delta for a growing population, has come from research, such as the Public Policy Institute of California study released last week.

It also has come from work done by local, state and federal agencies, academic institutions and stakeholders.

Members of the task force and Delta group will draw on this expertise - and request additional research as necessary - to arrive at recommendations that are innovative and capable of being implemented.

Common among the task force's members is a strong ability to understand and solve complex problems, starting from the premise that "business as usual" will not - and cannot - work in the Delta any longer.

Californians must protect this natural system, for the sake of our drinking water and our economy.

Delta Vision is all about finding that balance.

➤ *Writing a Feature Story*

A lot of what's on the front pages of a newspaper is information that needs to be told right away, or it will be dated and lose its relevance. Not so with a feature story. A feature is meant to be evergreen. It can have an indefinite shelf life to enable it to be used when needed by the media, and does not rely on when it is sent out. Features are often about how we live, love, and learn. Items on food, travel, pets, home improvement and health, for example, are among the many topics that lend themselves well to features.

However, features can also be used by small businesses and entrepreneurs for business-to-business messages or when a consumer focus is not applicable. Many trade and technical magazines look for features that tell a compelling story or provide factual guidance, and do not read like an advertisement.

Indeed, a feature needs to emphasize information over outright promotion. You achieve your promotion by being a source of good information.

General Guidelines for a Feature Story

- Look for a feature angle that will interest readers
- Talk to the source, uncover the story
- Identify up to three types of editors you want to target
- Keep most paragraphs to under 30 words
- Make the feature useable verbatim if cut after the second paragraph
- Write in laymen's language. Avoid superlatives, jargon and excessive mentions of a brand name.

Headlines

Write a headline that tells the story. This will be all editors will have to go on to decide whether they will open up the story and consider it for publication or broadcast. The aim is to have copy used verbatim. If it reads like an ad, it will not get used.

First paragraph

Expand upon the same story told in the headline in 30 words or less. Keep all your paragraphs short, using simple, declarative sentences. Do not digress. If you use adjectives, make them count.

Second paragraph

- Back up your story with supporting information
- Identify who is telling the story
- Add toll free number and phone number in parentheses
- Add e-mail address
- Add full Web site address enabling a hyperlink

Third paragraph

Use a humanizing or compelling quote from a spokesperson you want interviewed and who can lend authority to the story.

Fourth paragraph

Transition into details and explain how the project or program works, or provide tips and advice.

Fifth paragraph

Support the story with a third-party endorsement or a quote. Alternatively, you can provide additional details or biographical information, if necessary.

Sixth paragraph

Provide context to your story by including the fact or statistic that demonstrates the importance of the story.

Last paragraph

Tell them how to get what you are selling. Repeat purchase information such as toll-free number or your agency's web address.

Editor's note

Indicate availability of staff for interviews, photos, video, b-roll, or product demo materials.

Newsletters⁵

Staying in touch with your constituents and interested members of the public by way of a regular electronic or paper newsletter is a valuable PR tool. It enables you to give them the latest information about your programs and events, promote new ideas, and acknowledge recipients of awards, grants and promotions. Use the newsletter to announce donations, board appointments, and upcoming special events or recreation programs.

However, your newsletter competes for attention with television, the Internet, newspapers, magazines and other newsletters. Effective newsletters hit the recycle bin in days – instead of in seconds. To command attention, they must deserve respect. In other words, effective newsletters:

- look suited to their publisher
- are easy to identify and remember
- make reading easy
- are interesting
- are current
- include phone numbers, web and e-mail addresses
- have consistent branding (more on branding in Chapter 5)

⁵ Newsletter Sourcebook, p. 6, p. 22

The way your publication looks tells readers about you. Type, colors, paper and other design elements work together to convey your image, whether it's conservative, friendly or authoritative.

Readers judge your organization not only by the information you present, but also by how you present that information. Trendy clip art may not suit a newsletter from a bank. Primary colors work well for a day care publication. Large typography serves readers of a retirement newsletter. Make sure that your graphic look fits your organization.

In addition to shaping readers' judgment, your graphic look helps readers identify your publication at a glance. Keep your nameplate, format and especially the colors you use the same, issue after issue, to ensure instant recognition. Also, make sure your newsletter design harmonizes with business forms, letterhead and other documents produced by your organization. Consistent design builds instant recognition and dependable recall. Be sure to place your agency's logo in a prominent place. The newsletter is a visual example of your agency's brand (more on Branding in Chapter 5).

Research identifies the places readers see first in your newsletter. Readers look first at the front page, then the back page, and finally, the inside pages. Therefore put your most important information on page one.

When readers look at the inside pages, they see the right hand pages first, and then the left hand pages. Readers start reading at the upper left of the spread, but they glance at the right page first. Use the upper half of the right page for your calendar or important visual elements such as graphs, illustrations, photos or maps.

When readers look at a page, they see, in order: photos and illustrations; captions; headlines; pull quotes; subheads; and text. Use photos and illustrations to tell your story, not just as decoration or filler. And make those captions count. Put the essence of the story in the caption that readers see even before headlines.

CHAPTER 3: Grabbing and Keeping Media Attention

“Without publicity there can be no public support, and without public support every nation must decay.” **Benjamin Disraeli**

Always keep in mind the reporter writing the story and the newspaper preparing the editorial have final say over articles appearing in their media outlet. However, there are methods and tactics you can employ and practice on a regular basis that will dramatically improve your odds for gaining positive media attention.

Media Strategies

Strategy #1 -- Be proactive: What all reporters want is a good story.

Reporters work to gain sources and contacts, and you can do the same by developing reporter contacts. Keep a media binder and include the name, media outlet, phone number, and e-mail address of every reporter you talk to ... every one of them. Make notes about that reporter including the subject and reason for their call, beat they normally cover, etc. Develop a profile of reporters and media outlets, identifying the friendlies from the enemies. Consistently supply the friendlies with a regular inventory of the positive stories they are looking for and you will develop the reporters' trust and your credibility as a good source. These friendly reporters are people you can work with to increase your chances of getting attention.

You are no longer an unknown Public Information Officer (PIO) or PR person who has no standing, no credibility and no trust. In bad times, you are in a better position to get fair treatment. When the reporter calls with the bad news, or the potentially negative story, that reporter knows who to call first – you - and that's what you want. That reporter has chatted with you on many subjects and you have developed a rapport with them. Therefore, that reporter is more inclined to come to you with questions and to insure that you are treated fairly in the story.

Strategy #2 -- Never miss an opportunity.

There are story opportunities everywhere. Have your own organization's staff members give you tips. Make sure you know the folks in your own organization who do well with media interviews and get them out there when appropriate. The strategy here is that your own people like the press attention for the good things they are going. Present the idea not just as a string of facts or statistics, but as a story.

Find a hook for the story, offering something enticing, with compelling characters who give good interviews with good quotes. Offer "exclusivity". A reporter loves to know that he/she "owns" the story and you gain an ally. Never, ever send news releases just for the sake of quantity. If you send lots of stuff they don't like, you will condition them to toss your releases routinely without a second glance.

Strategy #3 -- Be reactive without fail.

When a reporter calls, return the call ASAP. Reporters are under pressure to get the story by a deadline they need to meet. Understand that without your side of the story, the reporter thinks you are a lamb headed for slaughter. When bad news is at your doorstep, you should be the most accessible. Waiting or any delay might rule you out of the story. Being out of the story means your side of the story is out of the story...dead and irrelevant. Most of all do not sound defensive when speaking to a reporter about a tough issue. Take a deep breath and speak when you are calm. Repeat the facts, offer alternatives and ask others on your staff to address the question.

When the reporter calls, you don't need to give an answer that second – you can say you need to gather information. Make sure you know the deadline for the story, talk to the people in your agency that understand the issue and get your side of the story organized. Help the press understand difficult and complicated issues.

When you are organized, get back to the reporter with hard facts in plenty of time to meet their deadline. Prepare your response with an answer that might steal the headline. If you feel your agency is getting a raw deal, and your agency is right, do not hesitate to react strongly to make sure the reporter gets the message that the other side could be very wrong. To set the record straight, make a bold stroke. If you know negative news is coming, consider a preemptive strike. The side that speaks first often sets the tone and pace, and frames the debate for following stories. Shape the argument, and you will shape the headlines. The first story becomes a reference point.

Think strategically and include damage control in the strategy. However, look beyond and determine the final impression you want to leave with the reporter. If your agency blundered, that cannot be undone, get beyond it and frame the story for the future, the plan to fix it. Reshape the argument and you will reshape the headline. Never, ever lie.

Get your facts straight and make sure your facts are out there in the true context of the story. If things are juxtaposed to make it look like your agency is at fault, and it is not, get to work straightening it out. If you do not tell your story, someone else will, perhaps not to your liking.

If you say "No comment", you are road kill. The media hates a vacuum. "Off the record" comments do not stay off the record for long in a negative story. If you do not respond or refuse to comment, that is not the end of it, they will find someone who will talk, perhaps not to your liking. If you are silent, you will be seen as admitting guilt. Never let a mistake or errors go unchallenged. Doing so locks those mistakes and errors into the historical archives.

Strategy #4 -- Write your own stories.

Every park system and agency has positive programs and events. A PIO is constantly communicating with the field in a never-ending search for stories. He or she writes 8 to 10 features every year, mixed in with many other responsibilities. Write the stories in feature story form, including quotes from the people involved. Then send them to the medium to smaller papers throughout the state, sometimes shot gunned everywhere, sometimes sent to a specific market. The amazing thing will be --- nearly all of these

stories can be printed "as is" ... the entire story. Some papers will call for pictures, maps or charts, be sure you have them on file and ready to send out.

Examples include Op-ed, letters or special stories. For op-ed, see the opportunity for a first strike, and write something for your Director. For letters, respond to op-ed articles that need a response. For special stories -- Many newspapers will accept a major article, such as: "This special report on preservation of wetland resources of the State of California submitted to the XYZ media from Ruth Coleman, Director of State Parks.

Strategy #5 -- Have a web page and use it to your advantage.

Put up a Press Room section on your web and include every press release. Put fact sheets in place and create an area for story ideas. Make sure reporters know it's there and can use it.

Strategy #6 -- Use e-mail in place of faxes

More and more reporters prefer an e-mail. Send press releases by e-mail and include photos. For good story ideas, send a cover e-mail with facts, following up with a phone call.

Strategy #7 -- Train your staff.

Teach your staff to do all of the above. Know your audience and the media that serves their interests. In PR, you must understand the wants and needs of the general public. As a staff member dealing with the press, you must understand the wants and needs of reporters, editors, producers and assignment editors. If you know how reporters think and work, you will know what you can do to meet the need and get positive attention. Study the media's approach to issues.

Strategy #8 -- The Bottom-Line!

- Effective PR is all about
 - relationships
 - credibility
 - trust
 - telling your story and being understood

Interviewing Skills

- ✓ Prepare and Practice
- ✓ Know Message
- ✓ Quotes
- ✓ Deadlines Met
- ✓ Follow up with Reporters

Interviews are one of the best ways to provide good first hand information about situations and individuals and get the message out. Interviews often use direct quotes and may use an anecdote that gives the story/article a boost.

Providing first-hand information for an article gives it the personal touch that often connects with the reader. Reporters generally contact potential interviewees ahead of time and advise them of what the interview will be

about. This gives the interviewee time to prepare and gather any materials that might be relevant to the interview.

Sometimes contacting the reporter is a hard task. Either they are busy or just do not want to respond. In this event, it might be necessary to deal directly with their secretary or assistant as a liaison or try to connect with them electronically. Most reporters answer their own phones and e-mail and often have a cell phone number available to call.

Once a date and time for the interview has been established, begin right away by preparing a list of questions that might be asked and possible responses. Conduct some research ahead of time to get familiar with other stories the reporter may have covered by searching the media outlet's web site. This creates a positive environment because the reporter may be very knowledgeable on the subject.

Be careful to stay on message.

After an interview starts, it often progresses and leads into more specific questions about a topic or subject. The best thing to do is stay relaxed so that a free flowing environment is created and the reporter talks freely. If the interview goes silent for a few seconds, that's okay. Sometimes reporters try to get their best material after things stay silent for a moment, because an interviewee thinks that they will need to be speaking and begin talking more in-depth about the subject at hand and go "off message." The key to remember is to stay focused on the message. If a reporter thinks they are not receiving the desired response to the question being asked, they may ask the same question in a manner that forces a yes or no answer.

Be attentive.

Make the reporter feel at ease by creating small talk or asking about a hobby of theirs that might have been revealed while researching their profile, this can lead to building a good rapport. Comfort is a concern for the interview. If the interviewee is unfamiliar with the process, it might be a good idea to hold the interview at their office, work place, or home to feel more comfortable. Be understanding when needed. Many interviews have been declined because the interviewee was not sympathetic to the reporter's needs. Someone that is sympathetic might get the reporter to expand on the topic or report more accurately on the message. This includes verbal acknowledgements and visual cues as the reporter takes notes. The reporter's notes also help generate more questions because of the thought process involved with note taking. Finally, the reporter may use a tape recorder for transcribing later.

Once the interview has been conducted and the story is composed, a reporter may make a final call to the interviewee. This allows another opportunity to verify and check accuracy. It also may be a time to let a quote stand on its own, with no further comment. However, if it is to check on last questions from the reporters editor before the story goes to print, it may be a good idea to make sure the reporter had it accurate. Always remember to thank the reporter for their time. You may consider sending the reporter a short note of thanks, too.

Interviewing Dos:

- Do know the key message and stay on the message to get across in the interview
- Do look for sound/media bites
- Do prepare. Watch the television programs and read stories in publications the reporter has written
- Do find out about the reporter and his/her story before agreeing to be interviewed. Have they covered the issues, organization or profession before? Who else are they talking to about this story? Do you really want to be in that mix? Politely decline the interview request if necessary. Often they are working on a deadline. Get information to reporters on time
- Do dress the part for TV interviews with conservative professional clothing. Wear solid colors, not white. Avoid stripes, checks and other busy patterns
- Do provide background info to reporter before interview
- Do prepare main message points and rehearse until you can say them smoothly
- Do talk in slow, clear, short sentences so reporters can get quotes/sound bytes. Sound bytes should be under 30 seconds
- Do ask them if they would like you to repeat any information. Create 3-5 talking points
- Do have good eye contact
- Do make the case and restate to stay on message
- Do use transitional phrases. *What's important here is... The bottom line is... The real issue is... Let me explain something... That is a good question, but what is really important is... I'd like to make this point before I continue...*
- Do be an active listener, be confident, and tell colorful stories/anecdotes to illustrate. Hand gestures and facial expressions are good, because they show enthusiasm
- Arrive early to familiarize yourself with the surroundings
- Do give reporter a media kit
- Do be forthcoming with photos, bios, etc.

Interviewing Don'ts:

- Don't say too much or rush to answer. Pause....
- Don't hesitate to tell a reporter you will call back if you are unprepared
- Don't be afraid to say I don't know the answer to a question but instead offer to find the answer and back to the reporter before the deadline. Never respond to questions based on unfamiliar facts
- Don't use professional jargon. Keep your message simple. To avoid being misquoted, don't volunteer negatives
- Don't repeat inaccurate information
- Don't speculate or answer hypothetically
- Don't get defensive, stay positive
- Don't say "no comment". Say, "I have not seen the research you are referring to", or "our policy is to not discuss lawsuits currently in litigation."
- Don't look into the camera; look at whom is talking. Avoid the temptation to look at the monitor. You are always potentially on camera, even if someone else is talking.

- Don't be afraid to ask the reporter to read back your quotes before the story is printed to avoid inaccuracies. Ask the reporter to check the story for facts with you before it is printed.
- Don't automatically agree to an interview. Interviews can be turned down. Would they compromise you in any way? Is it out of your range of expertise? What do you want to accomplish/gain by doing this interview?
- Don't say anything "off the record."
- Don't wear tinted or sunglasses or heavy makeup, but consider using powder to reduce shine. Avoid jangling jewelry. If interview is on-site, consider wearing agency branded clothing/uniforms. If phone interview, turn off computer and avoid rooms with background noise. Find out in advance if it will be live to be comfortable thinking on your feet. If edited, pause before answering, don't be afraid to ask to stop and start over. Stay stationary. Avoid rocking in chair. Be aware of nervous habits like pen tapping.

Crisis Communications

What is a crisis? The criteria for a crisis could include the following:

- A natural or man-made disaster
- A police/crime scene emergency
- An event or activity with potential for negative publicity
- An event or activity under close news or government scrutiny
- An event or activity that interferes with normal business operations, or jeopardizes your image
- Media wants to talk to someone on the scene about the event and are not content talking to a government spokesperson

There are ways to turn crisis into an opportunity. It is important to prevent and avoid crises when possible, but proceed quickly to address and resolve crisis issues before they escalate. The following examples demonstrate this technique:

"It's important to gather as good a picture of the situation as you can before you take action but to do that as quickly as conceivable and then put out everything immediately," said Roger Enrico, retired chairman and CEO of PepsiCo Inc. "A delay only causes people to suspect your motives and your competence. When syringes were discovered in cans of Pepsi diet soda [in some 20 states in 1993], we went public with everything we knew immediately. Craig Weatherup, who was then Pepsi-Cola president, made himself available for television interviews. And we made a video of a production line at a diet Pepsi plant, which runs at 2,000 cans a minute. That showed it would have been impossible for someone to have put the syringes in the cans during the production process. We also immediately hooked up with the FDA to establish a cooperative relationship to get to the bottom of the situation. To me, it's important to determine the accountability of leadership in this situation. If there has been a failure of leadership and management oversight then those leaders and managers responsible should be held accountable and asked to move on."

On the crisis regarding the release of Iraqi prison-abuse photos' explosive images:
Richard Edelman, CEO of Edelman Worldwide, a PR firm:

"If you have pain to take, you take it at the one time. It's like a Band-Aid -- you have to pull it off fast, not slowly. Having Americans wondering how bad the photos are is far worse. Journalists don't like it once the story is out. This story has been totally kept alive by people wondering what the photos could be. One thing they should do is get new photos out there, like ones of high-ranking American officials going over and visiting the prison or showing a new prison that is doing things correctly. The government needs to have new photos and drive its own story."

Sample Rude Q&A

Sample Rude Q&A documents are similar to FAQ documents but are for *internal use only*, and NOT published or distributed in any way to the public or press. The purpose of a Rude Q&A document is to prepare internal staff to answer sensitive or difficult questions from the media, customers and/or general public. The Rude Q&A document is highly confidential and should only be distributed to designated staff who serves as spokespeople for the organization.

The sample Rude Q&A below references a company that has just announced it will lay off 10% of its workforce.

=====
INTERNAL USE ONLY - CONFIDENTIAL

Does this layoff mean that your company is going out of business?

No. Our business is very stable; however the current market conditions require that we streamline our operations to reduce overall costs. We have chosen to integrate two units, and unfortunately there is some overlap in responsibilities, resulting in us having to lay off certain positions.

Couldn't you have cut costs elsewhere? (Instead of laying off people?)

The decision to reduce our headcount was inevitable; however our decision to combine the two units was the best option we had, resulting in the least amount of layoffs possible.

How will this layoff affect your ability to respond to customer inquiries?

We can assure our customers that they will not see a decline in their customer service. We have customer service systems in place that are not affected by this situation, and our policy of responding to and helping any customer inquiry within 48 hours will continue to be strictly enforced.

=====

CHAPTER 4: Electronic Media

“Two of the cruelest, most primitive punishments our town deals out to those who fall from favor are the empty mailbox and the silent telephone.”
Hedda Hopper

E-mail – Tool of Choice

“You've got mail.” Nine out of 10 missives are e-mail, according to a report that chronicles the rapid shift from postal letters to e-mail as the means of communicating. The report from the Congressional Management Foundation⁶, a nonpartisan group working to improve the effectiveness of Congress, says a personal message, either online or on paper, carries more weight than the mass mailings so popular with advocacy groups.

Based on a survey of 202 U. S, House and Senate offices, the Foundation found that Congress received 200 million e-mail and postal mail messages in 2004, four times the 50 million total in 1995. During that period, postal mail dropped sharply, from 50 million in 1995 to about 18 million in 2004. Many congressional members have web sites that encourage citizens to e-mail them with their opinions.

Through strategic partnerships with grassroots experts across the state, comprehensive programs with interactive web sites complement traditional strategic communications like direct mail and phone campaigns. The news media generally prefers receiving information by e-mail, especially if the advisory or release is being sent directly to a specific reporter.

A news organization web site regularly lists e-mail addresses of their staff and often a news or feature story will end with information on how to contact a reporter with a phone number and e-mail address.

Example Web Site Announcement:

“E-mail the Governor” (www.govmail.ca.gov)

Thank you for your interest in the Governor's Web Mail. Please note that governor@governor.ca.gov is still available but using the web form will ensure a much faster response, according California Governors office Web site at <http://www.governor.ca.gov>

To help us keep track of correspondence and to ensure that we are able to respond to California residents, please be sure to include your name and e-mail address and choose an appropriate subject from the drop down menu when you communicate with the Governor's Office.

⁶ “Communicating with Congress: How Capitol Hill is Coping with the Surge in Citizen Advocacy.”

Website Press Rooms and Media Rooms

Web pages labeled “press room” or “media room” are important because a majority of media professionals prefer to go online in search of information for their publications. An online press room can save time and money (postage and printing costs). Your press room is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, even when you are not.

An online media room is a “mini-site” or section that resides at a separate secure domain, but with seamless access to and from the main site. The media room is primarily dedicated to communicating media-specific information to reporters and journalists. But, it is also available to the public as a resource for basic company information. There are a few important things to remember when setting up your on-line press room⁷:

- Make it easy to find and remember
- Make it readable
- Make it fast loading
- Make it original
- Keep it current
- Be sure your site is targeted to the reporters it is meant to serve
- Present an easily understood contact list
- Offer accessible press release archives

Webcast

The word “webcast” is derived from “web” and “broadcast”. In the National Association of Broadcasters’ publications/training manual, a webcast is defined as sending audio and/or video live over the Internet or on digital networks, as well as listening or watching on-demand files.

A webcast uses streaming media technology to take a single content source and distribute it to many simultaneous listeners/viewers. The largest “webcasters” include radio and TV stations that “simulcast” their output, as well as a multitude of Internet-only “stations”. Rights and licensing bodies offer specific “Webcasting licenses” to those wishing to carry out Internet broadcasting using copyright material. Webcast is also used extensively in the commercial sector for investor relations presentations (such as Annual General Meetings), in E-learning (to transmit seminars), and for related communications activities. The ability to webcast using cheap/accessible technology has allowed independent media to flourish. There are many notable independent shows that broadcast regularly online. Often produced by average citizens in their homes these episodes cover many interests and topics from the mundane to the bizarre. Webcasts relating to computers, technology, and news are particularly popular and many new shows are added regularly. Some agencies will simulcast an all-staff meeting to outlying offices. The same technology could also be used to broadcast the opening of a new park site or a presentation by a prominent local figure.

⁷ Parkhurst, p. 88.

Example

LIVE WEBCAST TODAY

Schwarzenegger to Sign Strengthening School Accountability Bill This Morning

9/18/2006 - The Governor will sign AB 1381 authored by Assembly Speaker Fabian Núñez (D-Los Angeles), which will help increase student achievement by improving accountability and management of the Los Angeles Unified School District. Watch the live webcast at 10:30am at <http://gov.ca.gov/>.

Public Service Announcements (PSAs)

The Federal Communications Commission and the 1992 Cable Act make Public Service Announcements (PSAs) possible. PSAs are short, non-commercial promotions prepared to provide information that also benefits the general public – the intended audience of a PSA. Most PSAs are produced by and for nonprofit organizations. However, a for-profit business could use a PSA to promote a nonprofit activity or community event that could provide health and safety tips, assist in non-profit fund raising efforts, and inform and/or influence public opinion on an important issue.

Free air time (usually 10- to 60-second spots) on television and radio is available to community associations, advocate groups, nonprofit organizations and for-profit organizations that are promoting their nonprofit community events with PSAs.

➤ *Radio and Audio Tape PSAs*

Some radio stations require audio-taped PSAs that are ready to air. Audio PSAs produced by organizations may be as simple as having one person record the scripted message on audio tape. Write and format the copy so it is ready for broadcast.

"Copy" is a term used to refer to text in brochures, press releases and, as in this case, a broadcast script. Submit a printed copy (script) of the PSA, along with your pre-recorded tape, to the station and type "Tape Enclosed" at the top or end of the PSA script.

➤ *Live Copy PSA*

Live-copy PSAs are short scripted announcements to be read by the station's on-air talent during regular programming. PSAs are read as part of a community calendar. The message is usually read in time slots of 10, 15, 30 or 60 seconds. Many radio stations encourage the use of live copy PSAs.

Example PSA for Radio:

30 seconds:

RADIO NEWS RELEASES SHOULD BE TYPED WITHOUT IDENTATIONS...USE TWO PERIODS (..) TO DENOTE A PAUSE IN A SENTENCE AND THREE PERIODS (...) TO DENOTE THE END OF A SENTENCE...WHEN USING A DIFFICULT NAME IN A STORY.. FOLLOW THE NAME WITH THE PRONUNCIATION IN PARENTHESES..AN EXAMPLE WOULD BE BODIE (BO DEE) IS A GENUINE GHOST TOWN NORTHEAST OF YOSEMITE (YO SEM IT TEE) ..USE FOUR PERIODS (....) TO END THE RELEASE....

➤ *Television and Video PSAs*

For television, there must be a visual component to the story. Most of the guidelines for radio PSAs are applicable to television PSAs. Check with the station for their tape size requirements, they may need either a three-quarter inch or one-inch video tape.

➤ *Video News Releases (VNRs) and Audio News Releases (ANRs)*

Advance planning can provide publicity for an organization on a local TV or radio talk show. Interviews on news programs, whether taped or live, can also provide the combination of sight, sound, and motion that only TV with its physical demonstration of images can provide. TV and radio gives a high impact for the message while targeting large audiences.

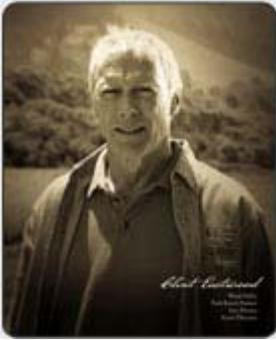
TV and radio can also be limited by the amount of time available and any possible costs associated with production of a commercial, Public Service Announcement (PSA), Video News Releases (VNRs) and Audio News Releases (ANRs).

Video News Releases are video clips that are indistinguishable from traditional news clips and are sometimes screened unedited by television stations without the identification of the original producers or sponsors, who are commonly corporations, government agencies, or non governmental organizations. A VNR communicates an entity's public relations or corporate message, is paid for by the corporation or organization seeking to announce news, and is delivered without charge to the media.

Produced in broadcast news style, VNRs relay the news of a product launch, medical discovery, corporate merger event, timely feature or breaking news directly to television news decision-makers who may use the video and audio material in full or edited form. Most major television stations in the world now use VNRs.

➤ *Post your PSA in Your Web Press Room*

Example Web site Announcement: Clint Eastwood serves as National Spokesman for Take Pride in America, promoting volunteerism, parks, and the health benefits of recreation:



[Watch PSA](#) 

Eastwood: 'Make My Day - Lend a Hand' Clint Eastwood Urges Americans to Volunteer on Our Nation's Public Lands

Starring Take Pride national spokesman Clint Eastwood, the Take Pride in America Public Service Announcements were created to help spread the word on volunteering and motivate people to respond to the many volunteer opportunities presented on our website.

CHAPTER 5: Advertising and Marketing

“The business that considers itself immune to the necessity for advertising sooner or later finds itself immune to business.”

Derby Brown

Advertising

There are many mediums an organization can choose for effective paid promotion, including newspaper, magazines, radio, television, brochures, and the Internet. If budget permits, developing an advertising campaign to promote marketing efforts can be a valuable tool for an organization. When choosing a method, consider the audience you are trying to reach, how much money you have to spend on promotion, and what method of communication will give you the most coverage.

Determine the best way to promote the organization, programs and facilities by identifying different forms and deciding on the best mediums (TV, radio, newspaper, brochure, Internet). Make promotional efforts consistent with your communications plan, including branding. For example, organization staff can wear t-shirts with logos at community events or during interviews.

The line between advertising and public relations is thin, but it is important to consider the differences when forming a promotions strategy. “Advertising is a continuation of public relations by other means and should be started only after the PR program has run its course. The theme of the advertising should repeat the perceptions created in the mind of the prospect by the PR program.”⁸ When forming your strategy, consider how much your agency is willing to commit to communicate your message. Public relations and advertising have their pros and cons and how you choose often comes down to cost and how much control you want over the message.

➤ *What do advertising and public relations have in common?*

- Both are marketing tools geared to elevate a consumer’s interest in a product or service
- Both may use a variety of media: print, TV, radio, Internet
- Both provide information that increases public awareness
- Both methods will promote an organization’s resources, facilities, and services

Advertisements are generally paid promotions or purchased media ads in local, state, regional or national media publications, newspapers and magazines, TV and radio. Ads can also be on the web, billboards, sides of buses, trains and park benches and bleachers. As a sponsor, your agency can provide products or in-kind services to be advertised in an organizational pamphlet or brochure. The benefit of using advertising is that it can be a persuasive tool for getting a message out about park and recreation

⁸ Ries and Ries, p. XII.

organizations. Advertising is also a way to control the message without depending just on free publicity from the media; allowing the buyer to decide what message to say, how the message is told, and what pictures are shown to tell the story.

The advertising budget for promoting a message should include production costs, buying the medium where the message is seen (ad space or airtime) and the cost of delivering the message. Often the cost can be underwritten by a sponsorship through a third party donor or supporter. Advertising credibility is important as people need to trust the message or the messenger. The public can be skeptical when viewing advertising and might not trust the message if, for example, a negative political campaign ad runs over and over on TV.

Sample Ads:

California State Park Adventures

All advertising paid by California State Parks Foundation, at no cost to the taxpayer.



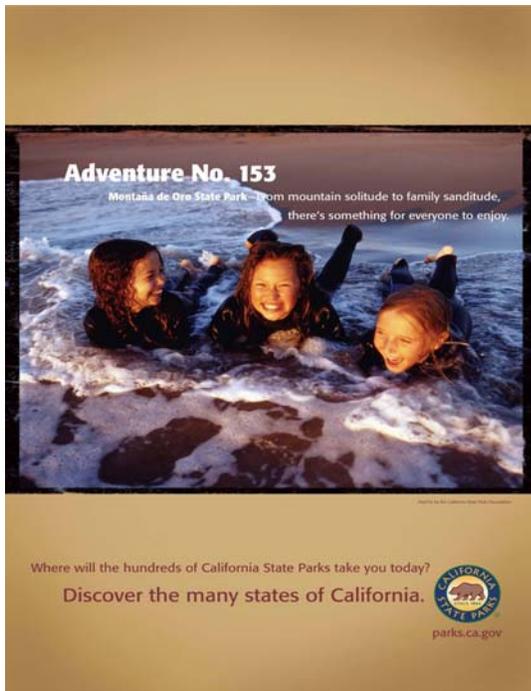
Adventure No. 220

Hearst Castle® –Where presidents stayed and movie stars played. Now it's your turn.



Adventure No. 197

Prairie City State Vehicular Recreation Area – California, start your engines.



Sample Ad Campaign Developed by State Parks to Promote Diversity within State Parks, 2006

Branding

A brand is the personification of an organization or its products and services. It is a trademark or distinctive name that identifies your agency within the community. Branding includes design aspects, such as logos and color themes as well as a written tag line. An organization's brand should be consistent with their values and the community's values.

Brands are designed to build relationships, connect emotionally with customers, and promise relevant benefits to consumers. Branding is a creative process that gives your agency the opportunity to show the public your services and programs. Use branding to attract visitors and future employees. It will draw and hold the public's attention to your agency for years to come. The good brand image builds visitor recognition and loyalty, and leaves a lasting impression of an agency.

Organization-to-organization communications, focus groups and polls, market survey trend analysis, and promotional materials are just a few examples of why branding is essential to promoting an organization and ways to form a recognizable identity. When thinking of running shoes or coffee shops, Nike or Starbucks may be the first images to come to mind. These companies have a strong brand identity that has built a long-term relationship with the public. Think of these examples when forming your brand identity within your agency.

Interactive advertising will enable the further 'anthropomorphizing' of brands. In the coming years we will be giving businesses a very human persona. What consumers see will, in a very real sense, seem like a living and breathing human being. Many companies will create virtual bodies -- male, female, young or old -- as well as virtual personalities. One business may, by all appearances, be a laid-back, calm, fatherly figure, while another will have the personality of an energetic, young, party-animal. To achieve this we will start to look seriously at what makes some people uniquely popular and likable, in the hope of capturing that essence for our brand.⁹

➤ *Where do you display your branding? What should your brand include?*

Branding can be displayed by using a unique identifiable symbol or image on brochures, letterhead, merchandise (t-shirts, baseball caps, cups, etc.), signage, business cards, community center sign, e-mail and web sites. A brand could be a picture of the local city, perhaps a tree within the park, a photo of the facility or a diverse photo of visitors. Get creative! A strong, clear slogan or tagline can send a message that encompasses what you want to communicate to the public about your agency. Advertising is not brand building, it is brand maintenance, and often repeats the words and ideas of your brand.

⁹ Jeff I. Richards (2000), Chairman of the Advertising Department at the University of Texas-Austin

Example Branding Logo teamed with a Mission Statement



Mission: The California Service Corps seeks to provide meaningful forms of volunteerism and service to the people of California who want to strengthen and support their state through service. The Corps will also financially support existing programs that apply for AmeriCorps grants and services. When you bear responsibility for California and serve the Golden State, you are a member of the California Service Corps.



Sample Branding:

San Diego Park and Recreation Department's clear and consistent branding program: Logo:



Tag line: "We enrich lives through quality parks and programs."

Sample Branding Logo, Goals and Personal Statement:



California State University, Sacramento (CSUS), one of the 20 campuses of the California State University, has a graduate program offered by the Department of Recreation and Leisure Studies.

Goals of the Department of Recreation and Leisure Studies has three major responsibilities: (1) to provide instruction for professional preparation of recreation, park

and leisure service professionals and in leisure studies; (2) to conduct research related to recreation, parks, resource management, leisure services, therapeutic recreation and other appropriate areas; and (3) to perform meaningful public service. Instructional goals focus on the preparation of professionals capable of meeting tomorrow's challenges in the recreation, park and leisure service profession.

Sponsorships

Approaching organizations about sponsorship opportunities can include local, regional, state, national, international businesses, service organizations and non-profits that could provide sponsorships for mediums such as events, brochures, and web sites.

Fundraising events are one of the ways to raise money for an organization and also provide sponsorship opportunities. For example, the "Rubber Duck Regatta" benefits the Special Olympics of Northern California. Ten thousand rubber ducks, each with a \$5 sponsorship, are dumped into the Sacramento River from the I Street Bridge and "race" to the Tower Bridge. Radio station KYMX, a corporate sponsor of the event, says "kayakers and small boats will keep track of the ducks, note the winners and scoop them all from the water. They [make] sponsoring a few ducks easy." Donated prizes to provide incentive included a seven day houseboat trip and a 12-day cruise.

Sample Sponsorship:

FEELING LIKE A LUCKY DUCK?



For just FIVE BUCKS you can help support local Special Olympics programs by adopting a racing duck for the 2005 RUBBER DUCK REGATTA – sponsored by The Grupe Company, Mix 96 FM, Comcast and the Penny Saver.

On SATURDAY, AUGUST 6TH, thousands of rubber ducks will be dropped into the Sacramento River in Old Sacramento and the race is on! The flock will float right through Old Town and the first five lucky ducks will win a fabulous grand prize! Participants need not be present to win.

Winners will receive thousands of dollars in cash and prizes including vacation cruises, a luxury houseboat trip, airline tickets, cash and even a shot at a \$25,000 car!

All proceeds benefit Special Olympics Northern California. For more information including race day festivities please call the duck hotline at (916) 929- RACE. Pick up your Duck Adoption Form at participating Metro PCS, Coldstone Creamery and CARQUEST locations or click here to adopt your duck(s) now!

Please join us in supporting this most worthwhile cause. Don't delay – adopt your lucky duck today!

CHAPTER 6: Evaluating Public Relations and Advertising

“Learning and innovation go hand in hand. The arrogance of success is to think that what you did yesterday will be sufficient for tomorrow.”

William Pollard

Recording media response, including tracking articles and radio/TV coverage is important. Whether creating a clipping book that includes all print coverage or reporting on the numbers of people attending a press conferences or special event, it is always important to find out if a communications strategy can be better, smarter, or modified to provide improved service. “Evaluation should not come as an afterthought. Setting goals and objectives in advance will help you establish benchmarks against which you can measure future activities. ... Plan now to evaluate later.”¹⁰

Tracking Communication Efforts

Monitoring the public relations and advertising process should be done at all levels of an organization. This includes a constant monitoring and awareness process in which all levels of the organization can participate. Monitoring the public relations and advertising status on a regular basis allows for noticing problems, issues, developments, trends, and opportunities that may affect the promotion process.

Tracking PR can be labor intensive. Searching the various mediums (print, TV, radio, etc.) will need to be done. This is done using Internet searches, scanning newspapers, listening to radio and television broadcast, etc. The goal is to track and monitor what type of coverage the event is obtaining. A search of newspaper clippings and broadcast publicity is used to analyze the quantity and quality of coverage. Analysis can be broken down by audience, message and frequency. Another thing to consider is the prestige of the publication or broadcast source. Keep in mind who receives these mediums and their attitudes toward the promoted material. Consider whether those receiving the message are those who were intended to receive it. Defining medium usage will allow a more precise target audience in future planning strategies. These issues will be the baseline for starting the evaluation.

Evaluation methods and techniques

Evaluation methods will depend on the type of event or promotion that has taken place. If it was the first event or promotion of its kind, then there are no previous standards to compare it to. On the same note, standards and expectations for the event should be made ahead of time to see if expectations are met.

The type of promotion will determine the evaluation. If it was a fund raiser, monitor the funds and analyze what worked for raising funds. How much was raised? Were goals

¹⁰ Bonk, Griggs and Tynes, p. 159

met? Was the correct audience reached? Did the audience include communities that generally donate to charitable organizations?

The same is true for monitoring a publicized event. In this example, numbers are important. The number of people that turned out for the event, the number of media that covered it, the number of people reached by the media and the area or geographic region reached are all necessary figures important for evaluation of the event and future events to come. What went well? What needs to be improved? Based on these results, analysis can be made of what worked and which areas did not. Additionally the evaluation will serve as a template for future analysis.

It is important to find an evaluation that will relate to the event and affords an appropriate means of measurement for the different type of events. Questions should be asked about the event. If goals were not met or exceeded, what contributed to this? Was it due to weather, lack of planning, lack of funding, coverage, participation levels, or something else? These are issues that can be remedied if an evaluation is done identifying the problem areas. On the other hand, if the event is received better than anticipated; this needs to be addressed as well. Additional staff, more seating, extended hours, and other adjustments can be considered for the next event.

Was there something making people decide at the last minute to participate in the event? Maybe the event benefits less fortunate people and just prior to the event there was a natural disaster. In this example, people might feel compelled to participate. These are examples reflecting an inaccurate representation of promotion efforts. Keep these factors in mind when evaluating events.

Finally, compile a synopsis of the event. Do not make it too lengthy, putting the important information up front. Let others know the results and recommendations for an improved event in the future.

APPENDICES

Glossary

advertising: the process of gaining the public's attention through paid media announcements

analyst: an individual representing a trade or professional association who reviews and comments publicly on products, services and companies

B-roll: film or television footage that plays while an announcer speaks over it

backgrounder: an in-depth document that explains a product, service or company in the context of its need, place in the industry and place in history; often supports and explains an accompanying press release

bio: biography (usually a brief synopsis of a person's credentials)

boilerplate: standard wording about a company that usually appears near the bottom of all company-issued press releases

branding: a trademark, logo, distinctive name, or other personification of an organization or its products and services

buzz: media and public attention given to a company, its products or services

byline: author's name given at the beginning of an article

call tree: a list of names and contact information that should be notified immediately in a crisis

client list: a list of a company's key clients; sometimes includes contact information

collateral: secondary documents that accompany or support PR deliverables

communications audit: a systematic survey of members of a target audience (often members of the media or potential customers) to determine awareness of or reaction to a product, service or company

content: information

copy: words printed in the press

direct mail: communication sent by post or e-mail to a targeted audience

electronic media: e-mail, video news release, webcast, web page, public service announcements, and other electronically presented promotions

e-zine: online newsletter or magazine

FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions): a list of questions and answers for the media pertaining to a press release; often included in a press kit

fact sheet: a short (generally one-page) document that provides a “snapshot” look at a company, product or service

follow-on: a product, service or article, for instance, that results directly from a previous product, service or article

font: computer or Internet typeface (though it’s technically interchangeable with “typeface,” font actually means a specific instance of a typeface including point size, pitch (width) and spacing; “Helvetica, 10 pt. with pitch value of 9,” for instance)

FUD: short for “Fear, Uncertainty and Doubt,” FUD is using positioning of one’s own products or services to cast fear, uncertainty and doubt on the competitor’s. For example, by calling Mike’s Auto Shop the “home-grown” auto shop, we created the doubt that other auto shops were not home grown, and the fear that if a customer did not go with a home-grown shop, they might not receive good service.

goal: the primary result a company is attempting to achieve through its public relations efforts

headline: the title of an article or press release

hit: a visit to a particular page on a web site by a web visitor

hype/hyperbole: overdone exaggeration

implied endorsement: the character the public often assigns to non-paid neutral or positive media coverage of a company, its products or services

industry authorities: respected individuals or publications within an industry

ink: space devoted to a company, its products or services in the print media

inverted pyramid: journalistic style of writing where the most important information is written first, followed by information of decreasing importance (this allows the reader to stop reading having gained the most important information; it also allows editors to cut or edit the story from the bottom up without omitting vital information)

house organ: a newsletter produced by a company for the employees of that company

jargon: language known only to members of a specific group, company or industry

key influencers: individuals, groups or publications whose opinion or coverage of a product, service or company can significantly affect public perception within a specific market

link: a portal to another web site or to another area within a web site

marcom: marketing communications

marketing: the function of promoting, selling or distributing a product or service

media: members or tools for disseminating the news; unbiased third parties (press representatives)

media coverage: mention in the media of a company, its products or services

media policy: organizational directive as to how company representatives will communicate with the media

media relations: the function of gaining positive media attention and coverage

mind share: amount of thinking an individual or group does about a particular product, service or company

news conference: a scheduled presentation to a group of media representatives

news feed: electronically transmitted broadcast information

noise: confusion caused by too many messages trying to be delivered at one time

objective: a specific, measurable goal

opinion editorial (op-ed): stories written by or for upper management or board members and printed as the author's opinion

pass-along rate: the number of times a received document (article, newsletter, brochure, report, etc.) is shared with other individuals

pitch: a prepared sales presentation, usually one-on-one (in public relations, it's generally an attempt to get positive coverage or analyst review)

PMS: PMS is the acronym given to color codes associated with a specific ink color library. Print shops often refer to a PMS color such as "PMS 328," a nice teal color. PMS stands for Pantone Matching System.

positioning (1): placement of a company, its products or services in a market category or in relation to its competition

positioning (2): the location a company's web page appears on a search engine after a searcher enters key words to search

press: members or vehicles of the media

press kit: several press deliverables combined in one package (usually a folder)

press release: a paper or electronic document submitted to the media with the intent of gaining media coverage

product demo: a physical run-through of a product or service by company representative (usually to analysts or members of the press)

proofread: carefully reading a document to weed out errors

public affairs: the public policy aspect of public relations.

public relations: the function of creating and maintaining a public image or identity

public relations advisor: a person who provides public relations guidance (may work inside or outside a PR firm)

public relations consultant: independent professionals who provide public relations guidance

public relations counsel: see “public relations advisor”

public relations firm: a company made up of public relations advisors and their support staff

public relations plan: a document that details specific actions to achieve a public relations result

public service announcement (PSA): short, non-commercial promotions prepared to provide information that benefits the general public

publicity: media coverage

pub: publication

Q&A/rude Q&A: a document that lists predictions of difficult questions that may be posed to a company spokesperson, and the best answers the spokesperson can give to answer the questions and meet the company’s objectives

query letter: a letter sent to a publication asking whether the publication would be interested in receiving a bylined article

repositioning: changing the placement of a company, its products or services in a market category or in relation to its competition

retraction: media correction of information previously and erroneously reported

running columns: regularly appearing articles of a specific theme or topic in a publication

sans serif/serif: these terms apply to typeface and whether a particular typeface has “tails” on it or not. Serif typefaces have “tails” on them — Times Roman is an example of a serif typeface. Sans serif typefaces have no tails; Arial and Helvetica are examples of sans serif typefaces.

script: prepared speech written on paper

self-mailer: a brochure or other document that contains postal information (return address, bulk mail insignia or room for postage) and room for an address label so that it can be mailed by itself, without having to place it in an envelope.

shelf-life: how long a document is held onto by the receiver

sig file: a signature block consistently used that includes a tag line about your company.

simultaneous submission: sending a bylined article to more than one publication at the same time (often frowned upon)

strategies: methods used to accomplish objectives

strategic partner: a company or organization that another company or organization aligns itself with to benefit both parties

tactics: action items to support strategies and objectives

tag line: a sentence or phrase that provides a creative description of an organization’s position (e.g., Red Cross: *We Save Lives*).

target audience: the key groups or individuals that a company most wants to receive its public relations messages

trade publication: a magazine, newspaper or newsletter published by members of a specific industry

typeface: printing type (e.g., Helvetica, Times New Roman, Courier)

Unique Selling Proposition (USP): A one-line description of your company’s products or services that differentiates it among your market from the offerings of its competitors

URL: Uniform Resource Locator. Generally when someone asks for your URL, they’re asking for your web site address

white paper: a technical document that explains how a product or service functions and its purpose

writer’s guidelines: a list of do’s and don’ts, including word length, topic choice, and format that publications provide for writers who wish to submit articles

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- Slack, S.E.. A Public Relations Survival Kit. Grendel Press, Loveland, CO, 2002.
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Resources

Web sites

California Park and Recreation Society (CPRS) www.cprs.org

Communications Consortium Media Center www.ccmc.org

Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) www.prsa.org

Professional Publications

The following are PRSA publications. For more information and to view articles online, visit <http://www.prsa.org/Publications>

Public Relations Tactics is a monthly newspaper packed with timely, how-to information.

The Strategist is a quarterly publication that addresses senior management and public relations executives in business, government and the not-for-profit sector. With an emphasis on strategic planning, the magazine takes a hard look at the crucial roles public relations practitioners play in the long-term success of the organizations and clients they serve.

Tactics and Strategist Online is the web-based version of PRSA's publications, however not all content from the hard copy versions will be made available here.

Communications Resources

Listed below is a sampling of vendors that provide services from hosting audio press conferences to creating a video news release. **DISCLAIMER:** This vendor list is provided for informational purposes only and does not constitute an endorsement of a specific company or their services.

Audio Press Conference Vendors

Genesys Conferencing

1861 Wiehle Ave.

Reston, VA 20190

Phone: 703/736-7100 or 703/456-3118

Fax: 703/736-7101

www.genesys.com

Provides services for audio press conferences, online meetings, desktop video conferences, telephone broadcasts and webcasts.

MCI WorldCom Conferencing

Phone: 800/475-5000

<http://e-meetings.mci.com>

Provides services for audio conferences, Web conferences and video conferences.

Broadcast Media Placement

Mainstream Media Project

Mark Sommer, Executive Director

854 9th Street, Suite B

Arcata, CA 95521

Phone: 707/826-9111

Fax: 707/826-9112

www.mainstream-media.net

Nonprofit strategic communications organization with services including radio bookings.

Medialink

529 14th Street NW, Suite 1230-A

Washington, DC 20045

Phone: 800/843-0677 (DC number 202/628-3800)

Fax: 202/628-2377

www.medialink.com

Provides production and satellite distribution of video and audio news, multimedia webcasting services, press release newswire distribution, and photography production and digital distribution.

Media Tracking

BurrellesLuce

1120 Connecticut Avenue, NW, Suite 225

Washington, DC 20036

Phone: 202/419-1850

Fax: 202/419-1860

www.burrellesluce.com

Provides monitoring for all forms of media, including: press clips; Web, broadcast and same-day monitoring; and media analyses.

LexisNexis

LexisNexis Group

P.O. Box 933

Dayton, Ohio 45401-0933

Phone: 800/227-9597 or 800/227-4908

www.nexis.com

Online subscription news tracking service with searchable full-text articles for most domestic print media, some broadcast transcripts, and increasingly foreign media as well. Does not include *The Wall Street Journal*.

U.S. Newswire

National Press Building
529 14th St. NW, Suite 1230
Washington, DC 20045
Phone: 202/347-2770 or 800/544-8995
Fax: 202/347-2767
E-mail: info@usnewswire.com
www.usnewswire.com

Primarily a national news and press release wire service, but also provides a daily fax or e-mail of nightly news headlines on ABC, CBS and NBC free of cost to members.

Video Monitoring Services

National Press Building
1066 National Press Building
Washington, DC 20045
Phone: 202/393-7110
Fax: 202/393-5451
www.vmsinfo.com

Records and monitors television and radio broadcast news in over 100 top U.S. and international markets everyday. Costs for 1-5 minute segment: \$110; 5-10 minute segment: \$125; 10-30 minute segment: \$165; 30-60 minute segment: \$190; 60-90 minute segment: \$265. All markets outside the top 100 cost more. Monitoring reports are available for the top 100 markets at \$10. An additional charge for any program not regularly monitored. TV and radio transcripts are available: first 100 lines are \$60, each additional line is \$0.60.

Press Release Distribution Services**Ascribe: The Public Interest Newswire**

National Press Building
5464 College Avenue, Suite B
Oakland, CA 94618
Phone: 510/653-9400
Fax: 510/597-3625
E-mail: info@ascribe.org
www.ascribe.org

Distributes the nonprofit and public sector news to the media via The Associated Press. Ascribe Newswire also feeds the news to major news retrieval database services, online publications, developers of Web sites and intranets.

PR Newswire

The Homer Building
601 Thirteenth St., NW
Suite 560 South
Washington, DC 20005-1794
Phone: 800/378-7112
Fax: 888/776-6559

www.prnewswire.com

Includes national news distribution via newswire and video news releases (VNR).

U.S. Newswire

National Press Building

529 14th St. NW, Suite 1230

Washington, DC 20045

Phone: 202/347-2770 or 800/544-8995

Fax: 202/347-2767

E-mail: info@usnewswire.com

www.usnewswire.com

National news and press release distribution via an electronic wire service feed, broadcast fax, e-mail, satellite, and Web-based news delivery services.

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