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MAY 2008 Getting Media Attention


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A service of the Corporation for National and Community Service - Resource and Fund Development Initiative

Dear “Media” Colleague,

The world would sit up and take notice ... if they only knew about you. Getting the word out about exciting new programs and the wonderful work you are doing in your organization would be much easier if only you could get attention from the media. Click on the titles on the right to learn more about...

Attracting Media Attention

Using the Internet for Press Releases

Taking Great Photographs

Do you have questions about working with media? Contact us through LEADline@CampaignConsultation.com for more information. You can still access previous issues of On-the-Go eTA by clicking on the title at the right.

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Attracting Media Attention

The print and broadcast media community is on a constant search for new and attention-getting material. All reporters want a good story, and they are on a deadline! You have a good story to tell, but for some reason, the press never comes knocking at your door. By using the right tactics you can become an in-demand, relied-upon source for reporters whenever one is needed. This arrangement will prove extremely beneficial to you and your organization.

Get noticed and get coverage for your programs, projects

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Get noticed and get coverage for your programs, projects and events by following these steps:

Get the word out

- Create a press release (see below.)
 - Prepare a press packet with brochures and stories about your program for short notice contact or to provide at press conferences.
 - Focus on the local relevance.
 - Include facts and statistics, or quote an expert.
 - Keep your message short and targeted.
 - Find as many outlets for your message as possible.
 - Always include contact information.
- Build a list of print and



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| <p>Cultivate the messengers</p> | <p>broadcast contacts who would have an interest in you message.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Important contacts include: Section editors and “beat” reporters at newspapers, producers and news directors at broadcast outlets, editors of professional or specialized publications. • Read everything they write. • Subscribe to blogs these journalist write and respond to their material. • Send relevant information to these journalists based on what they write. • Ask to meet these journalists over coffee or lunch. • Offer to act as a resource to meet their needs for material. |
| <p>Be visual</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set up photo opportunities at your events. • Write to evoke human and emotional images. • Get permission when you take photos and be sure to get names of people you include in your pictures. |
| <p>Timing is crucial</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be aware of publication deadlines, especially for weekly, monthly or quarterly publications. • Send out press releases with enough lead time, but not so early they get forgotten. Follow up with a phone call. • Look for timely connections to your messages. Ex. Early September = Back to school. |
| <p>Hold a media conference</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schedule only when you have a very important announcement. • Use to respond to a controversy (yours or your community.) • Be prepared to answer questions and have your best spokespeople present. |

Share Square

When media attention is needed

| | |
|--|--|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The best time for a news conference is 11 a.m. Avoid Fridays and Saturdays. |
| <p>Consider all opportunities</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be a presenter at a conference that will get covered by the media. • Post an “op ed” or write a “letter to the editor.” • Tap into internet radio broadcasts by acting as a talk show guest or even a host. • Use social media such as MySpace, FaceBook or YouTube. • Create a blog. • Post press releases on your web site. |

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Using the Internet for Press Releases

The press release or media advisory are commonly used vehicles for attracting media attention. A press release is used to make an announcement about your organization, program or project. If you have a comment on a news story, want to announce results of your research, achieve a milestone, or start a new project, it's appropriate to write a release. It should be no more than two pages. A media advisory is very brief. It announces an event and gives brief details with the aim of getting the media to attend and cover the event.

Many media professionals rely on the internet to get information quickly. An electronic press release provides an excellent opportunity to address an issue that has attracted recent community attention because you can present your program as a solution to the community problem. By using e-mail to contact media sources, you have the opportunity to provide immediate information to reporters or feature writers.

There are several things to keep in mind when you are writing an electronic press release:

- They are shorter than conventional releases...500 words maximum.
- Write your copy as a text message. Do not send as an attachment and do not attach photographs. You

to address controversy, ask a member of your Advisory Committee to submit a letter to the editor telling how your program or project can offer a positive solution.

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can note that pictures are available and post them on your website.

- The most important information should be included on the first screen. If reporters don't get your message right away, they may not scroll down the page.
- Compose a subject header to attract attention. This is not your headline... you will include that in your text.
- Include e-mail and phone contact information at the bottom of the page and a link to your website.

Finally, post all of your press releases on your website. Sometimes reporters are scanning the internet for information about an issue of interest. Having your press release posted will bring them right to your site.

[Click here to link to CNCS press releases you can use to provide format examples.](#)

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Take Great Photographs

You will have a better chance of getting attention for your press release if you include photos to tell your story, especially if you are trying to get coverage in local or trade publications.

The invention of the digital camera has made picture taking so easy that it is now possible for everyone to take digital pictures that can appear on your web site, in newsletters, accompanying press releases, in marketing materials, and for donor and volunteer cultivation and recognition. Using digital photos enables you to keep a user-friendly photo library and to edit less-than-perfect photos, to a degree.

Keeping digital photos also means you can easily import them into publications or e-mail them to media outlets and other individuals. After a donor or volunteer event, you can email your photos to the individuals featured. You can also email or print and include photos with your thank you notes.

Be certain you have permission to post or print any photos that include individuals.

[Click here to download a photo authorization form.](#)

[Click here for tips and ideas for taking great photos.](#)

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Let us know

“All I know is what I read in the papers.”

– Will Rogers,
American humorist, 1879-1935.

Have you found ways to work with media?

Contact us at LEADline@CampaignConsultation.com (LEADline is sponsored by the Corporation for National and Community Service through its Resource & Fund Development Initiative.) We would be happy to answer questions or to give you more support.

Thank you for your interest in On-The-Go eTA, We encourage you to [send this and other issues of OTG eTA to friends and colleagues](#) who would benefit from the information. Also, if you're on information-overload, you may request [email removal](#). Otherwise OTG e-TA will be back soon with another edition.

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**RESOURCE & FUND
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For more information, contact:
CAMPAIGN CONSULTATION, Inc.
2819 Saint Paul Street, Baltimore, MD 21218.4312 USA
T. 410.243.7979 F. 410.243.1024 Toll Free: 1.877.243.2253
LEADline@CampaignConsultation.com
www.CampaignConsultation.com

Details from above:

Taking Great Photographs (cont.)

Think ahead

If you are going to be taking pictures at an event, think in advance about who is important. If it's a donor event, at least get the major donors and then send them copies to remember the good time they had at the event.

When you are taking group shots, look for interesting arrangements of individuals or unusual angles. Show people interacting rather than staring straight at the camera. Use a self-timer, if you have one, and include yourself in the picture.

Compose your shots

An off-center shot is more interesting than one with the subject shot straight on. One basic photography technique is to use the rule of thirds. Use imaginary lines to divide your view into three vertical and three horizontal sections (a 9 square grid.) Then place your focal point at the intersection of any two lines.

Get as close to your subject as possible. Use the zoom lens until your subject completely fills the view. Shooting at eye level avoids unflattering shadows and distorted proportions. If you are shooting from a distance, frame your shot, especially when you are outdoors, using tree branches and vegetation to bring attention to your subject. Avoid a distracting activity in the background and watch for trees growing out of heads.

Get the right lighting

Strong, mid-day light casts harsh shadows. Try to take your pictures early or late in the day or when it is overcast. One way to eliminate shadows is to use your flash even when you are taking pictures in the daylight. To eliminate the dreaded "red eye" that often comes with flash

photos, caution your subjects not to look directly at the camera, use a red eye elimination button on your camera, or touch up after you have downloaded to your computer.

Take lots of pictures

With a digital camera, you can take lots of pictures very quickly without having to stop and reload film. You don't have to save or print the photos you don't like. You can have your pictures in your hand ready to mail out as soon as you can get to a computer.

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Resources

The National ASK (Awareness, Skills, Knowledge) to Sustain Institute, sponsored by Corporation for National and Community Service, provided by Campaign Consultation, Inc. 1998, 2002

The CNCS Resources Now! National Institute, sponsored by Corporation for National and Community Service, provided by Campaign Consultation, Inc. 2005-07

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Learning Products and Services

LEADline:

(Learning Experiences At a Distance) LEADline is designed to give information fast. Have a resource & fund development question? Use LEADline and within 24 hours you will receive response and advice from a fundraising professional.

Contact us

LEADline@CampaignConsultation.com

GIZMOs:

(Giving Information for Zooming Money Objectives) GIZMOS are resource and fund development tools for you and your volunteers. They are tangible products in packets, pocket brochures, CD-ROMs, games, etc. They feature a myriad of fundraising topics such as *The Case for Support*, an interactive online resource. To order, contact us through LEADline@CampaignConsultation.com or call 410.243.7979 or toll free at 1.877.243.2253

View and use our newest GIZMO, *Building Your Case for Support*, at

www.CampaignConsultation.com/gizmos/case

The Chronicle of Philanthropy:

: Everyone who comes to a Resources Now! National Institute gets a free subscription to the *Chronicle* for a year. Participants in CNCS Campaign Consultation workshops receive the latest issue free of charge plus a \$20 discount on one year's subscription.

Workshops/Clinics:

The Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), through its T/TA service provider Campaign Consultation, Inc., offers a three-hour workshops and clinics for those interested.

Online Courses/Webinars:

Web course delivery of topics pertinent to resource development such as — **Build Fundraising Volunteer**

Champions and Cause Related Marketing and Corporate Partnerships. Available through the Resource Center at <http://nationalserviceresources.org>

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Read Back Issues of OTG e-TA

- [Mid-April 2008 Corporate Sponsors and Business Sponsors](#)
- [April 2008 How to Ask](#)
- [March 2008 Planned Giving](#)
- [Mid-February 2008 Using Fundraising Consultants](#)
- [February 2008 Raising Funds from Neighbors and Friends](#)
- [January 2008 Fundraising in Diverse Communities](#)

[2007 Archives](#)

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