

Public Relations for Special Events

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If you plan it...

Public relations for special events is an effective tool to:

- consistently communicate your messages
- build relationships with the people your are trying to reach
- maintain a positive image



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Public Relations Plan

Whether you are creating a new event or revamping an old one, the outcome will be infinitely improved if you use a public relations plan.

- The definition thought to be many things is best defined as the management of communication between an organization and its publics.
- In order to effectively communicate with those you want to reach you must determine what the goal of your special event is.
- Your organization's mission and goals can serve as the foundation for a strategic public relations plan for your events.



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Public Relations Plan

The goal of your public relations plan will:

- Increase your organization's overall visibility
- Support the organization's efforts to influence or change public policy
- Communicate with employees, elected officials, other stakeholders, media
- Support the overall organization's marketing strategy
- Provide an external, objective viewpoint



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Measure Your Success

- Establish goals and objectives FOR YOUR PUBLIC RELATIONS EFFORTS, not for the special event.
- Platform for strategies, tactics and tasks specifically for raising awareness.
- Evaluation.
 - Surveys and questionnaires (online and on-ground) with attendees and media



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Strategies and Tactics

Media Relations

- The most popular way to communicate the messages of your organization and its special events is through the use of media relations, which is the proactive pursuit of positive, targeted media attention for an organization. It involves enlisting the media's interest in and coverage of your event.
- We all know the value of a well-placed and well-timed newspaper article or television report and its impact on our event.



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Who is the Media

Media Relations

- Print writers and reporters, online journalists (bloggers)
 - Facts -- even the most trivial ones
 - Quotes -- interesting statements from many sources (staff, clients, industry leaders)
 - Variety -- lots of information from many sources
 - Background -- to put the story into perspective (timely issues that are in the news)
 - Pictures -- visuals are always a plus



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Who is the Media

Media Relations

- Broadcast Journalists (radio and television)
 - Video -- visuals are what TV is all about
 - Brevity -- TV spots are short, so be on point
 - Sound bites -- Although the interview may be lengthy, only 10-15 seconds will make it to air



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Strategies and Tactics

Social/Digital Media

- Communication tool for the 21st Century
- Fundamental shift in the way people communicate
- Social media is how people are finding, consuming, and sharing information
- Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Periscope, YouTube



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Strategies and Tactics

Without a Content Strategy	With a Content Strategy
You publish a random collection of articles and other pieces of content.	Each piece you create fits into the larger story you are telling.
You focus on your org's goals, like fundraising, participation rates, and reporting on activities.	You focus on supporters' and participants' goals, like having fun, being a better person, and beating the bad guys.
You write about your expert staff.	You share your expertise.
The first (<i>I, Our</i>) or third person (<i>The nonprofit, it</i>) dominates your writing.	The second person (<i>you, your</i>) dominates your writing.
You feel like a salesperson as you write.	You feel like a journalist as you write.
You make your readers feel suspicious and annoyed.	You make your readers smarter and happier.
Readers may think of you as an intruder, or someone who interrupts all the time.	Readers will think of you as an invited guest who seems to know just what they wanted and what to say.
Your website, newsletter, and social channels are all managed separately.	You tailor and repurpose content for different channels, but the core message is the same.
Marketing, fundraising and program staff only talk to each other when they need something from someone.	Marketing, fundraising, and program staff work together constantly.
You leave people hanging.	You suggest next steps or opportunities.
You make it all up as you go.	Your work is planned, but with built-in flexibility to adjust as needed.
Your communications are unpredictable.	Your communications are consistent, like a promise made and kept.
You create long, tedious to-do lists.	You create results.

Strategies and Tactics

Internal/Stakeholder Communications

- Employees, volunteers and other stakeholders
- After all, your best spokespersons should be the people who work with you and for you.



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Strategies and Tactics

Crisis Communications

- A crisis can be any event that occurs unexpectedly, may cause a threat, is not in an organizations control and could cause harm to an organizations reputation.
- Although an organization hopes to never have to use it a crisis communications plan it is important to ensure all responsible parties take appropriate actions in a timely manner in the event of a crisis situation.
- The plan, if used correctly, will minimize the impact of a crisis upon the organization and normal daily operations.



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Strategies and Tactics

Crisis Communications

- Initial response within the first hour
- Check all facts
- Key spokespeople (trained)
- Public safety first
- All communications tools



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Roles & Responsibilities

- Who will manage your public relations activities?
 - In-House Staff, volunteer communications committee, interns?
- Budget Considerations
 - PR isn't free, you need to account for the time it takes
 - Other possible expenses – media gifts, media room (f/b), wi-fi

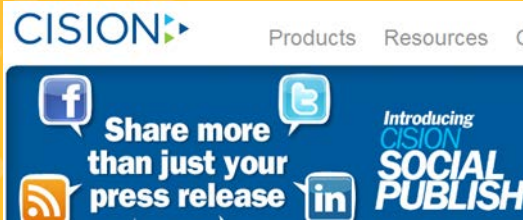


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