



Getting Noticed: Media Resource Guide

Thursday, October 6 • 1:30 to 2:30 • Red Lion Pocatello: Executive Room

Online Learning Resources

SPIN— www.spinproject.org

The SPIN Project is for organizations working to build a fair, just and equitable society that want to be heard in today's crowded media environment. The SPIN Project offers a broad range of resources to grow the communications capacity of your organization. We provide these online resources free of charge to introduce you to the basics of strategic communications.

SPIN's Tutorials provide simple, step-by-step guides to specific communications skills, from building a strategic communications plan to developing relationships with reporters.

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ALA Online Member Media Relations Tools

www.ala.org/ala/pio/mediarelations/

From Hot Issues and Initiatives to Tools that include ALA's Advocacy Handbook, this website gives you winning strategies for dealing with the press.

WebJunction's Media Relations

www.webjunction.org,

click on the *Learning Center* tab

This free, one-hour tutorial gives you practical tools for getting the word out about your library's programs and offerings. The course guides you step by step through writing press releases, preparing for interviews, and handling calls from the media.



People Resources

ILA PR and Advocacy Committee

www.idaholibraries.org/divisions

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Meridian Library District, (208)

888-4451, jillian@mld.org.

Idaho State Library

www.lili.org

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Northern Rockies News Service: Radio Tips

Working with the Media – Maybe you call, maybe you send out PSAs, public service announcements, or you send out info on a photo op, or board meeting – probably mainly by faxing and some e-mail...don't stop doing that – but the structure of radio has changed nationally and locally over the past ten years...

Mergers – fewer staff (60% fewer people work in media now than did ten years ago) staff overworked, maybe underpaid, and they are constantly pushed by their bosses to increase ratings and increase hits to the station or newspaper websites. Most personnel are sent daily “hit” counts for websites. And in the radio world, there is a constant threat of why aren't you doing something to drive people to the website?

Mergers mean the focus is entirely on revenue...even though the use of the public's airwaves is supposed to mean radio and TV is supposed to give something back in return, it isn't the case anymore...Newspapers are still better at this, but they have more inventory to do so. They can put your PSA on a little calendar listing – but it won't be on the front page. Radio and TV don't really have a good, similar outlet within their operations.

FCC regulation has changed – it used to be media HAD TO BY LAW air public service announcements. Not true anymore. And with the focus on revenue, they rarely share commercial airtime for “free.” Some local stations offer a half-price deal for advertising for non-profits, but you still have to come up with cash. Some stations do run PSAs, the ones that have empty commercial airtime, which means they are the ones the fewest people are listening to – when more people listen, more

advertisers buy. Also remember that even if you do get into the commercial ad rotation, ads are the number one tune-out for radio station listeners and TV watchers...

So, how do you elbow your way in with limited resources? Change your thinking. Realizing that PSAs aren't the avenue for radio and TV anymore....change all your PSAs and meetings and events to “News,” or “photo opportunities.”

Do not send out anything called a PSA to radio and TV – they are News Releases...or for TV, sometimes, photo opportunities (most TV stations do not send out reporters to cover stories, they send out camera operators to get the footage and then put the voice on the story at the studio) – or involve the media in the event...Find the news angle for the general population – think if you were running the TV station or radio station, would people stay tuned?

Fewer people working in newsrooms means you need to do their work for them. They're for the most part not stupid, although there are less educated than in previous years – but if it you make it easy for them, they'll cover the story. They will use your snappy writing...when targeting radio, always offer a way to get soundbites – list at least two contacts that can be reached by phone and comment right away – those two people can have cheat sheets so they're ready...when targeting TV – tell them where they can get the pictures to go along with their story - put it at a note at the top (Jillian can meet you anytime today to gather footage, or do interviews)

At least twice a year – fax, e-mail and snail mail a “Speakers Bureau” resource for all news outlets...with regional contacts – youth literacy,

internet research, use real terms, adult services librarian doesn't mean anything to anyone outside the library world...list home and cell phone numbers...news operates beyond library hours...news outlets do not post those numbers, they hold them secret as their own sources....

Ask a Librarian programs – wow – what a great resource for newsrooms...let them know – frequently – tie into a recent event, or upcoming event – Water Wars, need background research – Ask a Librarian...

And those programs should issue reports quarterly – or monthly – or whenever timely – what were the most frequently asked questions? – Most difficult to answer – anything that took extra work to find the answer to?

Example -

Get LOUD at the library – ask people vote on which air personality (TV or Radio) has the “Biggest Mouth?” Have a LOUD contest – local talk show host vs. local talk show host....appeal to media ego if there doesn't seem to be a news angle – or put politicians or elected officials in the story -



The Idaho Library Association contracts with the Northern Rockies News Service, affiliated with the Public News Services. PNS provides a wide range of reporting on social, community and environment issues.