

Identifying Media Contacts and Building Relationships

Media outreach is all about developing relationships with key media personnel. Start by compiling a media list of traditional media outlets in your community and their contact information.

Find media contact information

There are many ways to gather contact information for the media. Your method will depend on your resources (both human and financial), your community, and your media outreach needs:

- **Check with your partners.** If their organizations have an active public affairs department, they may already have a media list that would be suitable for SS/HS outreach.
- **Search the Internet.** Visit a site such as <http://www.mondotimes.com> for free information. You can also purchase affordable lists at <http://www.easymedialist.com>. If you live in a small to mid-sized media market, you are probably aware of the newspapers in your area. You can simply Google their Web sites and gather up-to-date contact information from there.
- **Visit your local library.** Libraries often subscribe to commercial media contact guides where you can find complete listings of media in your community.
- **Open the phone book.** Especially in smaller communities, you may find the bulk of what you need listed under newspapers, radio stations, and television stations. With outlets and phone numbers in hand, you can complete the information required for your list.

Identify the right media outlets

Start your list by identifying the most important media outlets in your community. Ideally, your list should eventually include all local media that reach your intended audiences:

- Newspapers and their corresponding Web sites;
- Radio and television stations and their corresponding Web sites;
- Local bulletins;
- Neighborhood publications;
- Newsletters of organizations in your area; and
- Specialized media (e.g., those serving communities of color, non-English speakers).

Add the appropriate people:

- News and assignment editors/reporters who cover your issues;
- Talk, specialty, or segment producers/hosts;
- Community relations and/or public service director;
- Producers/hosts of specific programs;
- Program director; and
- Station/paper general manager.

Use your list as your relationship-building roadmap:

- Make personal visits and phone calls, write letters and emails;
- Get to know journalists and producers, what they need and want, how they like to be contacted, and when the best time is to reach them and their interests, so you can tailor approaches to them;
- Establish connections beyond publicity; and
- Become a trusted resource!

Use the *Media List Helper Template* provided in this section to get you started with your media contacts list.

Trusted media relationships don't happen overnight; but in time, your commitment to media outreach can pay off in both the quantity and quality of news coverage for your SS/HS initiative.

For assistance in using these resources, contact your communication specialist. Our toll-free number is 800-790-2647.