

Media 101

Principles of Successful Media Relations

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What this presentation covers...

- Media 101: Who they are, what they want
- Getting the media to work for you
- Working with Journalists
- Mastering the Media Interview
- Damage control: What to do when they get it wrong
- Additional resources
- Discussion

Living in a global village

- The power of the media – here, there and everywhere
- If it's not in the New York Times, then it simply did not happen

The New York Times
ON THE WEB

THE GLOBE AND MAIL

NATIONAL POST
www.nationalpost.com
ONLINE

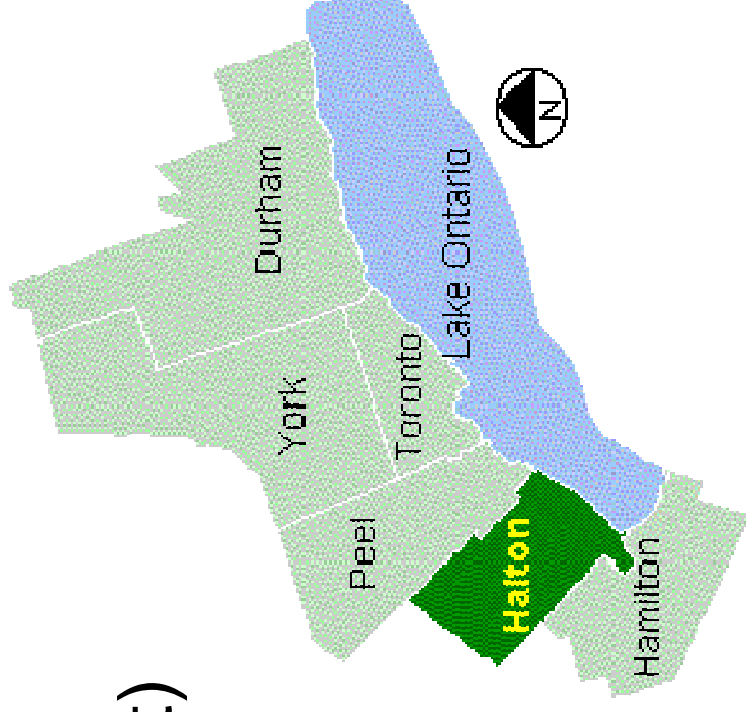
CNN.com™

The Media – Who they are

- Halton media
 - Local papers: Metroland papers, Oakville Today, North Halton Compass
 - Dailies: Hamilton Spectator, Toronto Star, Globe and Mail
 - Broadcast – CH News, Cogeco
 - Radio – Limited
 - **New! Social Media** – YouTube, MySpace

The Media – Who they are

- Who covers Halton?
 - Reporter (beat, specialist)
 - City editor/city desk
 - Assignment editor
 - Columnists



The Nature of News:

Is it new and is it news?

- News...
 - Is of interest to my readers/viewers
 - Is important
 - Is immediate
 - Has human interest components
 - Involves important people
 - Is happening close to home
 - Is unusual

What the Media Looks for

- **Newspapers** – colour, human interest, emotion, more info
- **Radio** – 5 to 7 second sound bite, clarity, colour, conciseness
- **TV** – 10 to 20 second clip, appealing visual images, drama, impact on a person or people

Getting the Media to Work for You

- Advertising is only one option
- Today's customers are savvy and skeptical
- Learn to use free publicity



Generating Publicity

- What's your story?
- Stage a special event.
- Organize a tour of your facility.
- Hold a contest.
- Offer a new product or service.
- Celebrate an anniversary.
- Tie in with a holiday.
- Launch or re-launch a website.
- Perform an important service to the community.
- Open a new branch.
- Host an open house.

Communicating with the Media

- Media release – what is it?
 - a way to get your story out to the media in a ready-to-publish form
 - Inverted pyramid
 - Who, what, where, when and why
 - The “who-cares-and-why” test
 - Quotes
 - Journalistic standards

Communicating with the Media

- Media release essentials
 - Don't bury your lead
 - Be concise
 - Avoid clichés or fancy language
 - Avoid overly technical language and jargon
 - Proofread your release!

Communicating with the Media

- Distribute your release to the right audience, the right way
- Other tools you can use:
 - Backgrounder
 - Media advisory
 - Pitch letter
 - Press kit

Working with Journalists

- Moving beyond a basic media relations campaign
- Position yourself as a credible source – getting them to call you first
- Preparing for interviews

The Journalistic Profession

- Media is changing
- Niche journalism – reporters are instant experts
- New media as a good tool for two-way communications
- Interviews are key to the story

Media Interviews

Ask yourself these questions before you accept or decline an interview request:

- What do you have to gain?
- What do you have to lose?
- What is the reporter's reputation?
- Does your message stand a chance of being heard?

Types of Interviews

- **Personal** – establishes quick rapport
- **Telephone** – easier than TV, but no visual contact
- **Radio** – your voice is key
- **Television** – in front of cameras
- **Panel** – different dynamic, the guests can have differing viewpoints
- **Open line** – everyone has an opinion

Guiding principles

1. The media has a job to do
2. Once it's "out there," you can't get it back
3. Never say "no comment"
4. When they get it wrong, get it corrected
5. You have rights.

Headline-making Quotes

- “I did not have sexual relations with that woman.”
- “Who’s Murphy Brown?”
- “Why would I want to go to Africa...”
- “Yo, Blair!”
- “You already have her.”



When You're in the Limelight

- Never say “no comment”
- Don't answer a negative with a negative
- Avoid verbal crutches – “um, uh, like, you know”
- Maintain a calm demeanour
- Tell them what you can
- If you don't know, it's fine!

When They Get it Wrong

- Correct factual errors
- Call reporter on clear omissions from the story
- Letter to the editor
- Article for publication



A Checklist for the Initial Call

- What is your name?
- What is your media outlet?
- Where can you be reached?
- What story are you working on?
- Who else is being interviewed?
- What is your deadline?

Conclusion

- Never take it personally
- Plan, prepare and practice
- Meet the deadline
- Ask for advice from a professional

Additional Resources

- Visit your local library or take an evening seminar.
- Talk to other organizations and scope out your competition.
- Read your community newspaper.
- Browse the Internet.
- Practice writing media releases.
- Contact the local chapter of the Canadian Public Relations Society (CPRS). Visit www.cprs.ca or www.cprs-hamilton.ca for contact information.
- Check out the resources available at the Halton Region Business Development Centre by visiting www.halton.ca.

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Discussion

