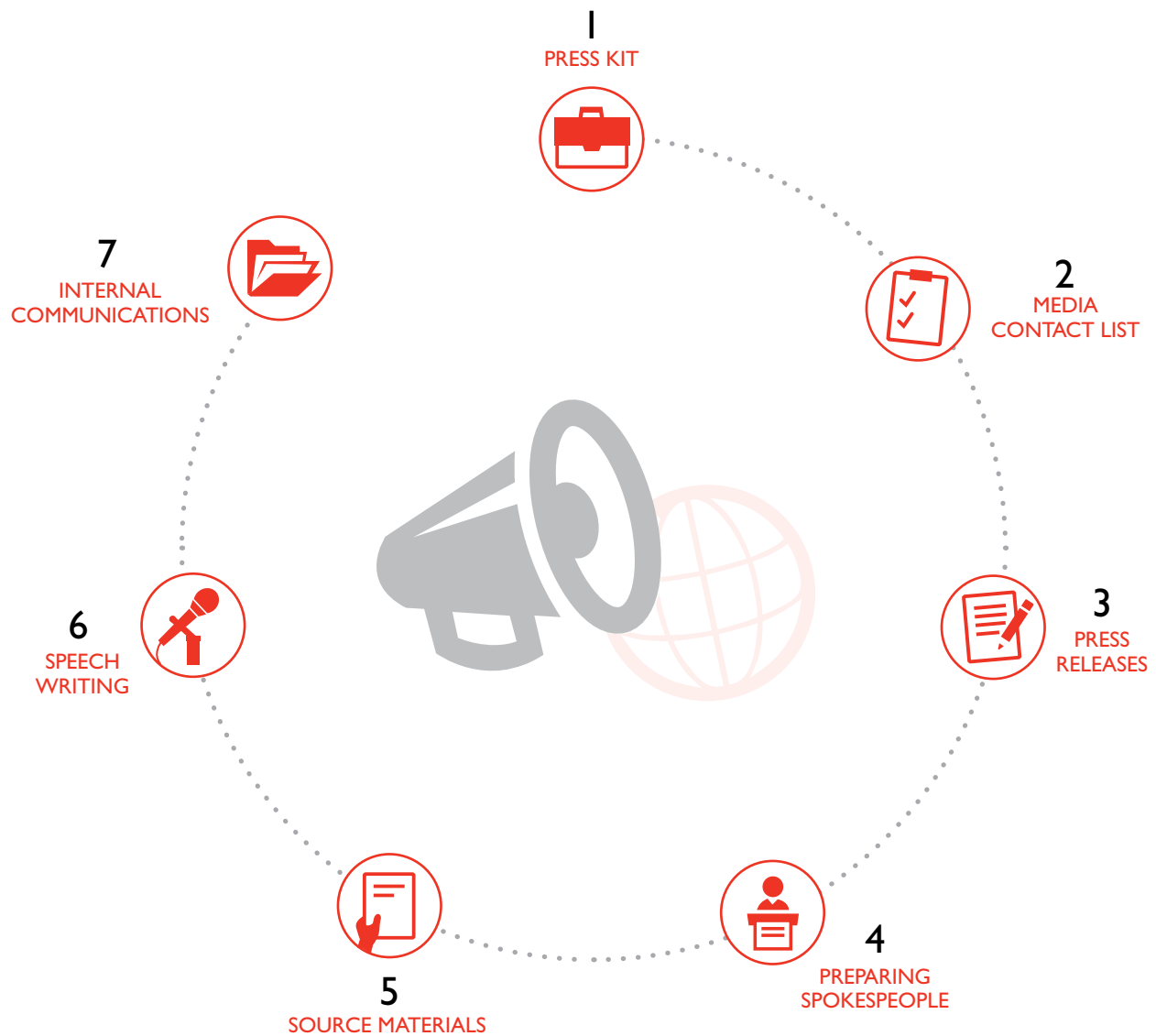


PUBLIC RELATIONS SERVICES

If you're looking for resources to create and manage a specific project or ongoing public relations activities, we offer an array of services to get your message across and your story told.





1 DEVELOP A DIGITAL PRESS KIT

- Provide the “boilerplate” description of the organization, including key facts and figures, biographies of your leadership, a brief history, supporting photos, and two or three stories on current trends and issues.
- This will function as instant background material when a story arises.
- With the ever-growing impact the Internet has on news, the best opportunity is to deliver the press kit instantly on your website.
- When a reporter wants a document or photograph, he or she can turn to your website and obtain information that can be used accurately and with a minimum of additional work.



2 UPDATE AND FURTHER DEVELOP THE MEDIA CONTACT LIST

- Taking time to do some research to update and enhance your media contact list can produce greater results for PR efforts.
- This will include finding the reporters we want to reach and knowing the format and medium that they prefer for receiving information. Delivering the story in the right format to the right media is more likely to ensure successful coverage.
- We also recommend investigating if news wires will be helpful in getting major announcements out to a wider audience.



3 WRITING & DISTRIBUTION OF PRESS RELEASES

We recommend developing press release content in several ways designed to build consistency and frequency of media contact:

- **Announcements:** Brief press releases should be issued on such topics as new product or personnel announcements, special events at your locations, plus external events such as speaking engagements, etc. These typically result in one- to two-paragraph stories in publications, and keep your name in front of the target audience.
- **Major Announcements:** These could be about new or high-profile events, major new institutional initiatives or new enhancements in business direction. These typically result in 500- to 800-word print and online stories, and often merit radio and television coverage. Occasionally, a press conference or press briefing may be appropriate in conjunction with major announcements.



3 WRITING & DISTRIBUTION OF PRESS RELEASES, con'd.

- **Trend Press Releases:** These are usually the most valuable to the news media, and will help us establish your reputation as a source. These can be about developing trends and topical expertise that would otherwise be difficult for the media to obtain.
- **Feature Story Releases:** Although a feature story must be newsworthy, in the broad sense of the word, it is also timeless. It can run in today, tomorrow or next week. A feature story is often called "evergreen" for this reason – it's always fresh and will not fade. Unlike a news story, a feature can have a point of view, an "angle," and is often longer than a hard news story on the same subject.
- **B-roll or Video News Releases:** Background video will help get a story on television. Again, B-roll is most useful when a subject is difficult or inconvenient to film by TV stations themselves. We may want to do a complete video news release (VNR) when there is an important announcement, or simply have background footage available for various television stations to put together their own stories.
- **Podcasts:** This has become a major publicity tool for people to take advantage of the Internet's multimedia capabilities (think TED Talks). Podcasts can be live events or archived and available on demand. They are a cost-effective, instantaneous method to communicate with media in a compelling, interactive manner that meets journalists' needs. Using podcasts, we can extend the reach of your PR efforts, ensure your message is communicated consistently across all audiences, and provide more compelling supporting elements.



4 PREPARING MEDIA SPOKESPEOPLE

- The media usually want to speak to an authority within the organization or in the industry, versus the public relations person, for in-depth stories.
- We can help recommend the appropriate spokesperson per topic, and provide the talking points and preparation for media interviews.
- In the event that you would like more in-depth media training for your spokesperson, we can help facilitate that as well, with a coaching session including practice interviews.



5 PREPARING AND DISTRIBUTING SOURCE MATERIALS

One of the key strategies of a successful public relations plan should be to provide source content for the media when the issue is relevant to current events and news topics. The source material can also take several forms, such as these:

- **“Op-ed” Articles:** So named because they typically run opposite the editorial page, these are an excellent opportunity to comment on issues of the day and to build name recognition as an expert in the field. They run under the by-line of the author (i.e. your spokesperson), and give you a chance to state your case in your own words, with minimal editing by a reporter. Once published, they can be effectively used as reprints.
- **Letters to the Editor:** These are typically short, concise and focused on a single point; however, they can be an effective tool for praising news coverage on a specific event or topic, addressing a controversial issue, clarifying any misconceptions or inaccurate reporting about your business, or introducing a new initiative or program.
- **“Riding” a News Story:** When a topic on which you or your organization has expertise is in the news, it is important to issue a release immediately that includes a brief comment and the statement that you are available for interviews.
- **Specialized Fact Sheets:** When we have more details and facts and figures than can fit in a one-page press release, we may need to do a fact sheet. It can be several pages long and include historical perspectives, anecdotes, and data. This gives us the best of both worlds: a short press release that quickly gives reporters and editors the essence of the story, and material to do an in-depth article.
- **Bylined or Feature Articles:** Beyond getting exposure for your organization, bylined articles can be used in a number of ways. Writing an article for a newspaper, magazine or online publication has a longer shelf life than that one issue. Reprints can be made available for downloading on your website, and given to media to establish expertise in a particular area. These articles should be timely and targeted. Usually it is wise to pitch the idea to a publication prior to writing it, using bullet points or a summary.
- **Internet Monitoring of Blogs and Other Social Media:** The Internet offers an incredibly wide range of public forums, in addition to the traditional array of print and broadcast sources, for dissemination of news and information. In addition to your own Facebook and Twitter accounts, you should make efforts to stay in touch regularly with appropriate bloggers, news groups and websites.



5 PREPARING AND DISTRIBUTING SOURCE MATERIALS, con'd.

- **Press Conferences:** These are usually appropriate for major announcements, and require some care in preparation and scheduling for a few reasons. One is that there is no time of day that is convenient for all of the news media, given differing deadline pressures. And if a major event conflicts with our press conference, we will lose media attendance altogether. Another reason is that many print reporters dislike press conferences because they want to get a better story than their competition (particularly broadcast outlets that can issue the coverage that same day.) And if everybody has the same information, it is difficult for a reporter to shine by virtue of doing more research.
- **Media Tours:** For the reasons cited above, media tours can be good options to a press conference. There are two types of media tours. Incoming – opening your doors to the media. Outgoing – taking your message to the media – is also effective, though somewhat more time consuming. An outgoing media visit is often best used for meeting with groups of journalists at one time, such as a newspaper's editorial board.
- **Community Meetings:** It may be important to hold small community meetings to explain various portions of a program that will directly or indirectly impact a group of citizens. In addition to an ongoing public relations campaign, it may be necessary to reach out to head off any negative publicity caused by lack of accurate information. Examples of appropriate use of community meetings might include property developments or changes.
- **Support of Special Events:** There will be specific events for which it will be appropriate and opportunistic to invite members of the media. Special events can be leveraged to bring attention to the organization or specific individuals, make an announcement, or spotlight something very visual that cannot be communicated via a press release. However, it is just as important to provide the media with background material – a one-page release, copies of statements made, information that will help them write a good story, event programs, souvenirs, etc. And, as with press conferences, follow-up is crucial. Often the press will not cover an event itself but will use it as a "news peg" for an advance story.
- **Public Service Announcements (PSAs):** Public service announcements should also be considered, although the topic needs to be in the interest of the public good, community service-minded, to the point and concise (e.g. 10, 15 or 30 seconds at the most). Since PSAs are short, broadcasters run a lot of them and they are easier to get than specials, interviews, features, or news coverage. We can actually say a lot in a short spot, and since it is likely to be repeated several times, the message will gain impact through frequency. These can be done as "live" copy, where the announcer reads the material live. We may also submit pre-recorded material. Live copy to TV stations needs to include a visual image – photo(s) or a short video clip.



6 SPEECH WRITING

- Remarks by your leadership can attract positive attention. These can include greetings to guests at receptions and dinners and remarks at special events, as well as guest-speaking engagements at external events (breakfast or luncheon talks, and panel discussions to service or professional groups, are among the possible forums).
- There is an art to writing speeches and more goes into the process than doing research on the speech topic. Knowing the person for whom the speech is written is important – the speaking style, the vocabulary, the cadence, and the preferences. Is he/she the type to go off on tangents? If so, we need to get our key points communicated early on. Does the speaker know the audience well? If so, he/she may want to speak more personally vs. formally. Will there be visual aids and is the speaker comfortable using them? Can the speaker carry off a humorous approach, if appropriate? Who is the audience and is there likely to be any opposition or media present, food being served while speaking, etc.?
- Can the speech be used in any other ways – turned into a newsletter article, posted on a blog or the website, or distributed to media directly? All of these issues should be considered in addition to the topic.



7 OTHER ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

- **Assistance with writing and design of internal news content:** This may include help with stories for your newsletters, annual report, etc.
- **PR campaign measurements:** In addition to counting media “clips,” one way to create news is to conduct a survey and report the results. Surveys are most helpful when you can use numbers to make a before-and-after comparison. They can be used to gauge the knowledge of your audience and determine the effectiveness of the PR campaign. Using your website or e-newsletter to conduct a survey can provide quick feedback at minimal cost.
- **Crisis management:** Crises are not always necessarily bad. An emergency or controversy may give you the opportunity to reach large numbers of people with your perspective. Good or bad, a few things are critical in handling crises. “No comment” is often the worst comment. Instead, we recommend being prepared and forthright. Advance preparation can turn a rough situation into a smooth operation with the best possible outcome. This includes having facts and figures ready, making sure spokespeople are well briefed and trained to deal with media, plus knowing key reporters and how to reach them off-hours, so we can proactively address concerns.