



How to Successfully Use Public Relations to Promote an Event

Using Public Relations ("PR") to promote your SAR event is an important way to gain attention for both your event and your SAR chapter that should not be overlooked

Good PR can be better than advertising, because it does not carry the built-in skepticism that consumers have in viewing ads. Moreover, if done correctly, PR has the advantage of being relatively inexpensive or free.

Getting good results with PR takes time, effort and knowledge, but the rewards can be significant.

The following pages are designed to give both examples and ideas that can be used to effectively gain attention for an event.

An effective PR campaign will usually include:

- Social Media
- A Press Kit
- Well written press releases
- Development of a current and accurate media contact list
- Distribution of timely press releases
- Disciplined follow-up with media contacts
- Development of an historical PR library
- Creation of a timeline guiding the PR campaign

Social Media as a Public Relations Tool

Today Social Media is the most powerful form of media. It offers greater flexibility than other forms of media, and is easily targeted to any market demographic. In other words it is a must for any PR campaign.

Social Media sites to be considered;



Facebook 70% *



Instagram 32%*



Twitter 30%*



Snapchat 25%*



Pinterest 25%*



Tumblr 18%*



LinkedIn 17%

**Percentage of internet users that use this site (Time Magazine, March 2017).*

Facebook, at this writing, is the most used site, and most used by ages 34 and above (64%), it is the easiest to access and use.

Use as many social media sites as you are comfortable with or find someone that has social media skills within your chapter.

1. Write a short press release with a photo or photos. Share it on your own social media.
2. Start with friends, family, and compatriots in your chapter and state. Ask them to read and share your post. You can request this directly in your post.
3. Post frequently in your Chapter Facebook Page.
4. Find the Facebook page for all of your local media outlets and post your event there.**
5. Repeat your post frequently, but change the photo and or message slightly.

**See Page 3 Writing a press release*

***See page 4 Building a media contact list*

Developing a Press Kit

Press Kits have two functions: first, as a source kit to use as resources to contact media; and second, as a PR tool to be given directly to media contacts.

As there is cost to producing Press Kits, they may be used sparingly and given to media contacts that promoted your events in the past. Good Press Kits can be costly to prepare, so weigh carefully what you need to accomplish using Press Kits against the cost of preparing them.

Contents

- Folder - A folder with the SAR logo or brand on front with two pockets inside to hold materials
- Bio - A one page description of what and who SAR is, with attention given to your chapter. Understand that the media are generally more interested in local events and local people, so if possible, identify people by name and connect them to your community. Be sure to include past community events in which your chapter has been involved, such as Eagle Scout Awards and ROTC awards.
- Press releases
- *Photos- Of the event you are promoting or similar event photos from past events.
- Contact information identifying the principal points of contact, along with relevant business cards.

Building a Media Contact List

The first step in promoting an event is finding the proper media contacts through whom your event may be publicized.

- local newspapers
- local radio stations
- local and cable tv networks
- local online news
- social media

The simplest way to start is to google [www.ABYZ News Link](http://www.ABYZNewsLink.com) and look for local media by city or county.

**.See sample link below*

A general internet search will also help to identify the local media, such as newspapers, radio stations, and tv stations, listed by city or county. Prioritize your list by targeting media that reaches your local area.

Your efforts will be more effective if you identify specific people that work in the news departments. Try to find personal contact information, including email address, street address, and phone number. These are often provided on the websites for each company, and may be shown by department. Find contacts in the news room to whom you can direct your press releases and/or press kits. Do not forget to follow up with a telephone call to request an appointment.

With each media type, check the website to see if there is an events calendar. In many cases, you can enter your event on the events calendar. Note-This should be done in addition to issuing a press release or media kit.

*<http://www.abyznewslinks.com/unitemi.htm>

Writing an Effective Press Release

- The two main keys to an effective press release are hooking your audience and having local appeal.
- The hook is a catchy headline and a subhead that makes the reader want to read further.

Think about your target audience and what about your event might appeal to them. It will usually involve a local person doing something of note in the community. However, it might involve a community activity or event, or something of local interest.

- Keep it short (1 page)
- Make it newsworthy. Tie it in with community.
- Invite celebrities and identify them in the press release
- Use photos, since a picture is worth a thousand words.
- Be sure to use high quality photos and don't be afraid to send several.

SAMPLE PRESS RELEASE



Contact: John Doe

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Tel. xxx.xxx.xxxx

Email: johndoe@sar.com

Date: 6/10/2017

MAIN TITLE OF PRESS RELEASE GOES HERE IN ALL UPPER CASE

Subtitle Goes Here in Title Case

The body of the press release begins here. Get to the point immediately. What is the actual event?

Second paragraph: concrete details including date, time, location, and the cost to attend.

Third – Last paragraphs: for the remainder of the release, tell a story about your event and why the event is so important. If possible use a quote regarding the significance of the event by a dignitary or officer of SAR.

About SAR- The Sons of The American Revolution is a patriotic, historical, and educational non-profit organization whose members trace lineage to Revolutionary War Patriots. SAR seeks to maintain and extend the institutions of American freedom, an appreciation for true patriotism, and value of American citizenship. The ____ Chapter has been involved in community events etc.
<https://www.sar.org>

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[Three hashtags is the symbol for the end of the press release.]

Establish a Timeline

Timing can be everything

- Start planning well ahead of your event.
- 6 weeks before the event, start posting announcements in event sections of publications, radio and tv.
- 4 weeks in advance, send out your first press release and follow up with a telephone call and/or email.
- 2 weeks prior to the event send an email reminder to your entire contact list. Attach a copy of the release.
- 1 Week before the event send a second press release to your contacts. Then follow up with a telephone call or a personal email to the list.

Post Event Publicity

After your event is a great time to gain publicity for your chapter/state society and to attract potential new members.

The advantage now is that you have photos and other materials that can be used in press releases and can be added to your press kit and library for future use.

During the event, be sure to get plenty of photographs that can be used in a post event press release or future release and post event social media posts.

Interview officers and dignitaries at the event and get quotes you can use in a press release. Follow the same steps from your pre-event publicity campaign.

Following up

Follow up is crucial to good PR.

First, after your press release is sent out, make a personal telephone call or send a personal email to the people you identified that might be editors, writers, and others responsible for posting your event.

Let them know you sent out the release and don't be afraid to ask for their help publicizing your event.

Make any community connections you can, mentioning dignitaries that will be in attendance or any other community involvement.

Be sure to add a brief bio on SAR and the highlights of your event.

Finally, after your event is over be sure to send out press releases once again to gain any post event coverage.

Send photos from the event and any stories that have emerged from the event. In addition send an email to any media contact that has helped, thanking them.

Post event PR is a great way to spread the SAR name and to publicize your chapter.

Build an Historical PR library

Having a library or resources for future PR is a valuable resource. Be sure to collect copies of any articles, calendar notes and other forms of publicity that result from your efforts. If the publicity is electronic, check with the radio and/or tv station sources to see if you can get a copy. ou can measure the effect of your PR work this way.

Collect press clippings wherever you find articles, events, and/or photos.

Media impressions can be measured by multiplying each article by the audience reach of the publication or station.

Website traffic: Note the number of times your website was visited.

Lead Sourcing: Add a question to your website (ie., Where or how did you hear about this event?)

The idea is to maintain a good list of the media that supported your event as a future reference and a list of media to send follow up press releases and/or thank you emails to your media contacts.

Get copies of photos taken at the event and/or used in media.

Get copies of any radio or tv coverage or interviews.

Prepared by:

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