



Giving
Hope
Today

Media Kit

Managing Your Media Coverage

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Introduction

We have put together this guide to assist you with your media efforts and we are here to support you and the promotion of your event wherever possible.

The following guide contains tips, tools and guidelines for working with the media, when representing The Salvation Army. We've also included sample documents and tables for you to reference and sample at your discretion.

We want you to succeed in your efforts with the media. We also want to ensure that the most up-to-date and accurate information is reaching the public so that all parties are represented fairly and accurately. If you require any help at all, please *contact the Director of Marketing and Communications at DHQ for any media-related information needs.*

The Director will provide you with the following types of information: current facts and figures; key messaging for events (Kettle Campaign, Santa Shuffle, etc.) specific Army information, dates and contact information for other events, programs and information sources and contact people.

As a representative of The Salvation Army, it is important that you maintain a level of professionalism that is in accordance with our organization. Your actions and words will be represented as those of the organization: any misinformation or misguided actions will reflect on our credibility and could therefore affect our ability to carry out our mission. As such, we hope you will take into account the following guidelines when working with the media.

Guidelines for working with the media on behalf of TSA

- ✓ Notify DHQ before approaching the media with your event or story if you feel you may need support
- ✓ Ensure your materials and information are current and up-to-date before engaging the media
- ✓ Do not knowingly make a false or untrue statement
- ✓ Do not express opinions that counter or directly contradict those of The Army
- ✓ Do not provide quotes from a member of The Salvation Army unless approved by said person or the Director
- ✓ Do not give out personal information about any member of The Army unless first approved
- ✓ For more information on The Army, please provide the media with our web address www.salvationarmy.ca, toll free 1-877-469-4438 or the contact information of the Director

How to contact local media

Why is the media important?

Think of the media as gatekeepers to your community. By talking to one journalist you may be able to share your experiences and key information about your event with hundreds / thousands of individuals in your community.

Sometimes getting your event promoted is as easy as picking up the phone to your local editor. But the reality is that on most days the media is contacted hundreds of times by people just like you who want their story told.

Your best chance to get your story told is to ***understand what they want, how they want it and how to deliver it.*** We hope this toolkit will provide you with exactly those tools.

Tips to contacting the media and promoting your event

Know who to contact before picking up the phone to ensure you're pitching to the right person. If you plan to go to more than one media source, build a targeted media list of contact names. The best place to start is the media outlet's Web page.

Generally you will want to look for the following contacts:

- ***Print*** – Editor
- ***Radio*** – Programming Manager / Assignment Editor / News Editor
- ***TV*** – Assignment Editor / Producer

Know how to contact the media. It's important to know how and when to contact the media. Some editors / producers want phone calls and others prefer email. Contacting the media inappropriately or at the wrong time – such as on deadline – can lead to damaged relationships. ***A rule of thumb - earlier in the day is always better than late in the day, especially for TV and radio.***

Pitch by phone whenever possible. This will get you better results and allow you to build the relationships you need to ensure consistent success. It's much easier for someone to delete an email or send a "no" than it is to hang up on you. Call before you send your release - not after.

Develop your message before delivering your pitch. Most reporters are extremely busy and will give you only 30 seconds to make your case. They will not bite on your idea if you don't offer a convincing argument...and even though we think our story is worthwhile, that doesn't mean they do. DHQ can help you with fact sheets, key messages, program descriptions, etc.

Ask whether it is a good time to talk when calling a reporter. Remember, they are extremely busy people. If he/she says yes, introduce yourself fully, reference previous conversations (if applicable) to jog the reporter's memory on who you are and why you're calling. Be as specific as possible - the more general you are, the less likely your chances for success. As you develop a relationship with the reporter (and that should be your goal) it will be easier to get their ear.

Leave ONE message only and then continue to call the reporter at different times of the day (non-deadline times, of course) until you catch them live. You have to be tenacious with some reporters. Once you have them on the line, it is much easier to make your case, as you can engage a reporter in a conversation and handle objections as they arise.

When sending your story via email, use the following rules:

- Always send your info in the body of the email – not as an attachment.
- Ensure you craft a catchy subject line – don't give it all away in the title
- Include a short pitch along with your contact information
- Avoid using all caps or excessive punctuation – your pitch could be mistaken for a virus
- Include the event or URL - a reporter will often visit the web before calling back
- Never send out a group email with your entire distribution list in the header.

NOTE: call *BEFORE* you send your press release *NOT AFTER*. It gives them a heads up and increases your chances of them picking it out of the 100's of releases they see every day.

Never make promises you cannot keep. Nothing will squelch a media relationship faster than if you promise something you cannot deliver. Promise to do your best to get the reporter what they need in advance of their deadline, and *always* follow through. However, if you won't be able to come through, let them know as early as possible.

TIPS TO MAKE YOUR STORY / EVENT APPEALING TO THE MEDIA

Give them an exclusive. If a media outlet receives an important story first, it might consider it big news because they will have a "scoop" that makes them look good.

Make it different or unusual. Stories that are new, novel, or original are news because they have the "gee whiz" factor. If your event is an annual, then find the "new" element of feature of it to pitch.

Be at the extreme. Any kind of superlative that can be used in the story--first, biggest, smallest, or oldest--can provide the "gee whiz" element.

Be part of the solution. The media hear a lot about the negative impact of the issues we seek to address. If you can position your cause as a rare "good news" story, it will be an attention getter. If your event is helping solve a problem, let it be known.

Put a face on the story. Compelling human-interest angles of any kind are news, because journalists are always looking to put a human face on their stories. **NOTE:** the media are partial to stories involving children and animals.

Make it local. A local angle on a national news story is news to media in your community. When pitching the local media, keep the emphasis on the word “local.”

Provide pictures. Newspapers and magazines love photos and TV reporters have to bring in visuals to get a story on the air. Let the media outlet know that photo opportunities are available. If dealing with a small publication, have some photos of your own to contribute. The Army can help you with this.

Always keep in mind that you don't want to pitch The Army's product or services to the media; you want to pitch the outcome and the benefits of your efforts or your event.

How to make a local media list

What is a media list?

A media list is a database containing names and information about media who can help promote your business, event, product or service. You will send a media advisory inviting media in your community to interview your local spokesperson in advance of your event and to attend the event itself.

When compiling your media list, collect as many relevant contacts as possible. Start by thinking about the media in your community – newspapers, radio stations, television stations – anyone who might publicize, or help promote your local event / cause. Then use the phone book, Internet and other resources to locate contact information for each source.

*Your media list should also include contacts for community event calendars/listings.

Your media list should contain the following information:

- ✓ Name – full name of the person you are contacting
- ✓ Media outlet – name of the newspaper, radio station or television station you are contacting; if an outlet has more than one news program, record each program as a separate entry on your media list.
- ✓ E-mail – most journalists have a public e-mail address, but sometimes you may only be able to locate a generic e-mail address (e.g., news@cbc.ca)
- ✓ Telephone – keep in mind that the contact may have more than one telephone number
- ✓ Notes – use this area to keep track of your follow-up with the contact

Name	Media outlet	E-mail	Telephone	Notes

Get to know your media list

Each media type has different needs when it comes to how they present their news and feature stories:

- ✓ Television producers and journalists often look for quick quotes and visuals that can be captured on camera.
- ✓ Radio producers and hosts usually present news items as quick news updates, often based on what is in the newspaper, or they do phone-in discussions that are either taped in advance or done live on the air.
- ✓ Print and web formats, such as newspapers and websites, cover stories in more depth, often seeking a greater explanation of an issue along with facts.

Using a Media Advisory

The media advisory is a tool to encourage media to interview your spokesperson about your event. A media advisory is typically sent via e-mail (as mentioned earlier, copy and paste the text into the body of an e-mail), but can also be printed and sent via fax if media prefer this method. Today the media is looking to social media sites more and more often.

Ideally you want to have two media advisories (one to distribute to media in advance – the pre-event media advisory; and one to distribute to media on event day – the event day media advisory). Your advisory should contain information relevant to your event, including location, time and date, name of local spokesperson(s) and your contact information. The advisory puts your event on their radar. To sell your event...it is best to contact them in person.

Approach the contacts on your media list

Don't be afraid to contact the media. Remember that journalists need story ideas and welcome the opportunity to interview someone with a compelling story.

Always respect deadlines!

Call and state why you think the topic or issue is important to their audience, share basic facts and explain why you think the reporter should want to interview you or your local spokesperson. You should always communicate your own personal experience or connection to the event or cause. Send your media advisory with all the relevant information.

Tips on Talking to the Media

Once you have distributed your media advisories and started following up with your contacts via telephone, the hope is that media in your community will request more information and interviews.

A reporter may want to talk to you about your event and/or may want to talk to your local spokesperson as well.

Prior to an interview, be certain to prepare. Carefully review the main points you want to get across. If promoting one of The Army’s events, please prepare with the key message document provided. These messages are the key points you want to try and communicate to the reporter during an interview.

Although the majority of the time the media will cover your event because it is a “good story” and a benefit to the community, the reality is that conflict, scandal and controversy do sell newspapers. Sometimes unfortunately the media will unintentionally or intentionally flush out the negative side of a story and without your knowledge run “their version.” This is not something you or The Army wants. Here are some tips to keep in mind.

Tips to control your message and maximize your media interview success

DO's	DON'Ts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Prepare as you would for an important meeting ✓ Keep messages simple and easy to understand; try to deliver them early in the interview ✓ Be ready to tell/illustrate your story ✓ Stick to what you know ✓ Correct misinformation ✓ Use everyday language ✓ Act like everything is on the record ✓ Practice ✓ Try to be natural /conversational rather than scripted 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ “Wing it” ✗ Deviate from key messages ✗ Let reporter put words in your mouth ✗ Say “no comment” ✗ Repeat a negative phrase ✗ Express a counter-corporate personal opinion ✗ Feel pressured to answer a question if you don’t know the answer ✗ Take it personal

Managing media on EVENT day

On event day, local TV cameras or newspaper reporters/photographers may show up at your location to film the excitement.

If possible, try and find out which local media are planning to attend in advance. This may not always be possible, so if media show up unexpected, don't be caught off guard...this is a GOOD thing!

Bring several copies (5-10 copies) of your event-day media advisory and any other related materials for the media to take away. This will ensure the info they have to produce their story is accurate. Always include contact info in case they need to follow-up.

How to Manage Media at Your Location

1. Do your best to greet all media who attend and keep your eyes peeled for any cameras (video or still). That way, you'll be able to identify yourself to the TV crew or the newspaper photographer and manage any interviews or shots.
*establish a media sign in desk or station or notify the people at registration to call you when media arrive. Best to include this in your advisory.
2. Ask the reporter what type of shot they are looking for and offer to set-up an area for them. They will always tell you what they need.
3. If the reporter would like to do an interview, ask them who they would like to speak to and what type of questions they plan to ask. Try to coordinate quickly.
4. Create a media sheet to collect names and contact information. Get the reporter/photographer name and contact information and ask them if they know when the coverage will run. Share this information with the The Army when you can so we can help monitor the coverage.

PR/Media relations Timeline

The following is a sample timeline template you can use for developing your media list, sending out your media advisory and following up with media.

Generally you want to have your media plan in place two months out. If you are trying to get interviews start sending info three to four weeks out. For the day-of coverage, send them the advisory 10 days out and the five days out and then morning of. If you have confirmation they will be sending someone, you don't need to send follow up advisories, but do confirm two-three days prior with a phone call. ***Below is a sample only.***

Date	Deliverable	Responsibility
Two months before event	Briefing call with The Society to review event and answer questions	Name
Two months before event	Contact prospective spokespeople to gauge interest and availability	
	Contact Communications Manager for any ongoing inquiries and updates Finalize identification of local spokespeople	Name
Six weeks out (week of)	Develop media advisory Create media contact lists	
Four weeks out (week of)	Distribute pre-event advisory	
Six weeks out (week of)	Distribute community event calendar/listings	Name
Two- Four weeks out	Conduct local media calls Conduct media interviews as required Provide updates to Communications Manager on media interviews	
Two days prior and on event day	Distribute event-day advisory Conduct local media calls Greet media on event day	
After event day	Send out a post release to media who did not attend the event Provide updates Communications Manager re: media interviews that took place	Name