

THE SOCIAL CHANGE AGENCY

NONPROFIT

nonprofit 
LEADERSHIP LAB

HOW TO GET PRESS ON THE CHEAP

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GUEST TODAY:

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CEO AT FENTON,
A SOCIAL CHANGE
COMMUNICATIONS AGENCY

FORMERLY WITH
THE ATLANTIC PHILANTHROPIES
AND **THE NATION**

20 YEARS EXPERIENCE HELPING NON-PROFITS,
FOUNDATIONS AND POLITICAL ORGANIZATIONS
TELL THEIR STORY

THE CHALLENGE?

- Small organization
- No communications staff
- Still need visibility, whether for credibility, new stakeholders, money or other

WELCOME
BEN WYSKIDA
FROM FENTON!

TAKE MY JOB!

GUIDING PRINCIPLE:

Communications is substance

- it's sharing what matters about
your work

WHAT CAN VISIBILITY GET YOU?

- Credibility
- Constituency
- Funding
- Leverage
- Uptake on
your ideas

KEY QUESTIONS TO ASK BEFORE YOU DO PRESS/COMMS

WHAT DO I WANT PEOPLE TO KNOW ABOUT OUR WORK?

- What's unique about it?
Different/special?
- Why?
- To what end?

<div> <div> NON-FUNCTIONAL </div> </div>			
<div> <div>WHO IS MY AUDIENCE?</div> <div></div> </div>			
<div> <div>Audience</div> <div></div> </div>	<div> <div>What do they care about?</div> <div></div> </div>	<div> <div>How do we reach them?</div> <div></div> </div>	<div> <div>What is the ask?</div> <div></div> </div>

STRATEGIES TO GET PRESS ON THE CHEAP

THREE P'S:

- Pontificate
- Package
- Pitch



PONTIFICATE

OP-EDS, ESSAYS AND BLOG POSTS ON YOUR AGENDA

- Not overly self-promotional
- Have a POV
- Challenge the sector
- Try to place, if no luck put it up on Medium and social

Tip: First person experiences from you or people you serve can be very moving and meaningful content.



PACKAGE

WHAT CAN YOU BUNDLE UP AND RELEASE AS A “PRODUCT”?

- White paper
- Research
- Policy Agenda

Tip: If you’re doing an “annual report,” make it a research product you can release with donor info at the end.



PITCH

LOW-IMPACT PRESS ENGAGEMENT

1. Invite (3) top reporters and columnists on your beat to coffee

- Not pushing a story right now - you're making yourself a source
- Who does your board know?

2. Press breakfast (or webinar) on your issue

- Straightforward presentation

3. "Tour de ____"

- More labor intensive, but gives reporters an opportunity to see your work

4. Are there partners who would include you in their press event? Or funders?

5. Stunts work. The more creative and blunt, the better.

Tip: If you get a press list, you can issue statements - short, punchy reactions to the news - instead of a whole press release. This can double as your tweet and facebook post.

WHAT ELSE?

ORGANIZATIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE

- Develop a monthly editorial calendar to see what moments the org can tap into. Great project for an intern, who can also draft for you a bank of content for social.
- Set up Google Alerts for the your issue area to monitor news stories.
- You don't need a whole formal press list, but as you see articles about your work or stories that resonate, keep a running google document.

A WORD ABOUT SOCIAL

- **Having an online presence** - website and social of some kind - is fundamental. It's the table stakes, and legitimizes you. If you have nothing, start here before doing any press at all.
- **Integrate your online and offline actions.** Ensuring that every IRL event (especially press conferences) are live tweeted and filmed for digital distribution if at all possible.
- **Reporters are on twitter. Follow them!** And put content there for them to respond to.

Tip: Arguably, visibility (and donor engagement) rest more as much on digital as they do on press

WHAT ABOUT PRO-BONO SUPPORT?

- Make a focused, concrete ask.
- Sometimes you get what you pay for...
- Beware low bono: better to get a little bit of good work than a lot of mediocre.
- Communications projects can sometimes be funded as one-offs from a funder



DISCUSSION

THANK YOU!

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