

How to successfully use Public Relations to promote an event

Using Public Relations to promote your SAR event is the best way to gain attention for both your event and your SAR chapter.

Good public relations can be better than advertising and in most cases relatively inexpensive or free.

Getting good results with PR takes some time and effort but the rewards can be great.

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

The key parts to good PR

- Using Social Media
- Producing a Press Kit
- Writing a good press release
- Building a media contact list
- Sending out the press release.
- Follow up with media contacts
- Building a historical PR library
- Establishing a timeline for your publicity

Social Media as a Public Relations tool

Today Social Media is the most powerful media. It has greater flexibility than other 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%

**Percent of internet uses 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%) and 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 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 and just 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. 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 that has historically promoted your event.

Contents

- Folder - A folder with SAR logo on front with two pockets inside to hold materials
- Bio - A one page description of what and who SAR is and specifically your chapter. Be sure to include past community events your chapter has been involved in such as Eagle Scout Award, ROTC awards, etc.
- Press releases
- *Photos- Of the event you are promoting or similar event photos from past events.
- Contact information of who to follow up with. A business card.

Building a Media contact list

The first step in promoting an event is finding the proper media contacts where 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 and look for local media by city or county.

**.See sample link below*

Also googling media type such as newspapers, radio stations, tv stations will list specific media by city or county. Prioritize your list by targeting media that reaches the area your event is in.

For each media you intend to contact try to find a personal contact with email and phone number. These are often listed at the bottom of the internet page for each media or in the departments like events, local news etc. It is important to find a contact so the release and or press kit can be delivered directly to a person you may follow up with.

With each media, look on the website to see if their is an events calendar. In many cases you can enter your event yourself. 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 appealing to them.
- 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
- Keep it short (1 page)
- Make it newsworthy-Tie it in with community.
- Invite celebrities and use in press release
- Invite media to your event
- Use photos, since a picture truly 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 press release begins here: get to the point immediately. What is the actual event?

Second paragraph: concrete details including date, time, where, why, any cost to attend

Third – Last paragraphs: for the remainder of the release, attempt to 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 hash tags 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 in event sections of publications, radio and tv.
- 4 weeks in advance send out your first press release and follow up 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 out to your contacts. Then follow up with the personal email to the list.

Post Event Publicity

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

Interview officers and dignitaries that 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 email and or phone contact with the people you have found that might be editors, writers, and others responsible for posting your event.

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

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

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

Finally, after your event is over be sure to send out 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 great to spread the SAR name and specifically your chapter name.

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 tv station source to see if you can get a copy. Additionally you can measure the effect of your PR work this way.

Collect Press Clippings wherever you find articles, events, photos

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

Website traffic-How many times was your website contacted

Lead Sourcing- Add a question to your website. 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:

Community Engagement Committee, Joe Khare, Mickey McGuire Co chairs

Public Relations Subcommittee, Mickey McGuire Chair

PR subcommittee members

Mike Elston

Jim Engler

Gregory Lucas

Bill Vette

