



How to Work with the Broadcast Media

Radio and Television create images inside the viewer's or listener's head and can create visual and emotional memories that stay with them. Five minutes of well-prepared radio interview material or 30 seconds of television air time can raise the profile of your group significantly. If you want to use the Media effectively, be aware of current social, economic and political climates. You have a better chance of your story being told if it is relevant to the issues of the day. Build a profile of media contacts in a Media Contact Book and keep your list current.

RADIO

Community Radio provides the greatest opportunity for groups to have their stories heard. Compared to commercial radio, the publicity available is generally longer and usually free. Listen to a number of Community Radio stations to find the one that will reach your target audience. The West Australian Community Broadcasting Association has an excellent website that lists the names of radio stations in WA. Visit www.wacba.com.

Remember radio is on all day and night, so you can contact them at any time to make an appeal for airtime. To find the best time slot, make contact using your Media Contact Book and note which day and time they are likely to deal with the kind of issue you wish to raise.

Community Announcements are a free service and several seconds of air time may be all you need to promote your group's meeting or upcoming event. Highlight the most important points you want to advertise, including dates, venues, and costs involved. Submit an email or fax one week prior to the event.

Talk Back Programs

When going on a Talk Back Radio program, ensure the spokesperson is prepared and informed about the group's issues. Telephone the station early as there may be a queue and turn off the radio once you're on air. Write down what you want to say beforehand and keep it short and to the point.

Interviews

Radio stations may also conduct live or recorded interviews. Live interviews can take place in the studio or from your telephone. You may prefer a telephone interview for ease and convenience, but a studio interview does provide eye contact and time to talk with your interviewer off air. Recorded interviews take place in the studio and are broadcast at a time chosen by the station unless a specific date has been agreed upon. The benefit is that you can decide if the content is suitable before it goes to air.

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Preparing for Interviews:

- *Ensure your group contacts are informed about the interview and are available to take calls for up to two weeks. Have brochures ready to send to interested parties.*
- *Provide written information about your group to the Interviewer. Present questions you would like them to ask and points on which you want them to focus.*
- *Speak to the interviewer prior to the interview to let them know what you do NOT want to discuss to prevent awkward moments.*
- *Summarise in two or three points at the beginning of the interview and then prepare to talk in more detail.*
- *Ensure your information is reliable and accurate; keep your points clear and simple.*
- *Be polite, friendly, calm and act naturally.*

TELEVISION

Television affects people's emotions far more than any other medium. The reach of television is extensive and the vast majority of people regard television as their primary source of news. Television must cram information into short timeslots, so you may have only 30 seconds to provide the vital facts about your group.

The most effective way to approach commercial television stations is to send a Media Release to the Chief of Staff. On commercial television, in order to reach your audience without paying for it you will need to get coverage during a News or Current Events program. Current Affairs programs like Today Tonight cover local, national and international issues in more depth. They deal with human interest, political and social issues. They are more flexible and allow more time to research their subjects. You will need to check which stations present current events programs and then make contact with them.

Another option is to approach community based television stations. Community based stations have more air time available and they also provide free or low cost coverage during certain times of the day. Some also provide free community service announcements and may provide you with 30 second coverage on an ongoing basis. Contact the Advertising or Program Director at www.ctv.com.au.

Lastly, ensure that your group spokesman is well prepared for an interview. You need to be conscious of the image that the spokesman presents as this will be a reflection on your group and the image you want portrayed. It is essential to be well presented and aware of facial expression and body language.

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