

**MEDIA
RELATIONS
GUIDEBOOK
FOR CIVIL SOCIETY**

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With the special contribution by EcoAlbania team



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List of Abbreviations

SBHE – Save the Blue Heart of Europe

CSO – Civil Society Organizations

KPI – Key Performance Indicator

NGO – Non-Governmental Organization

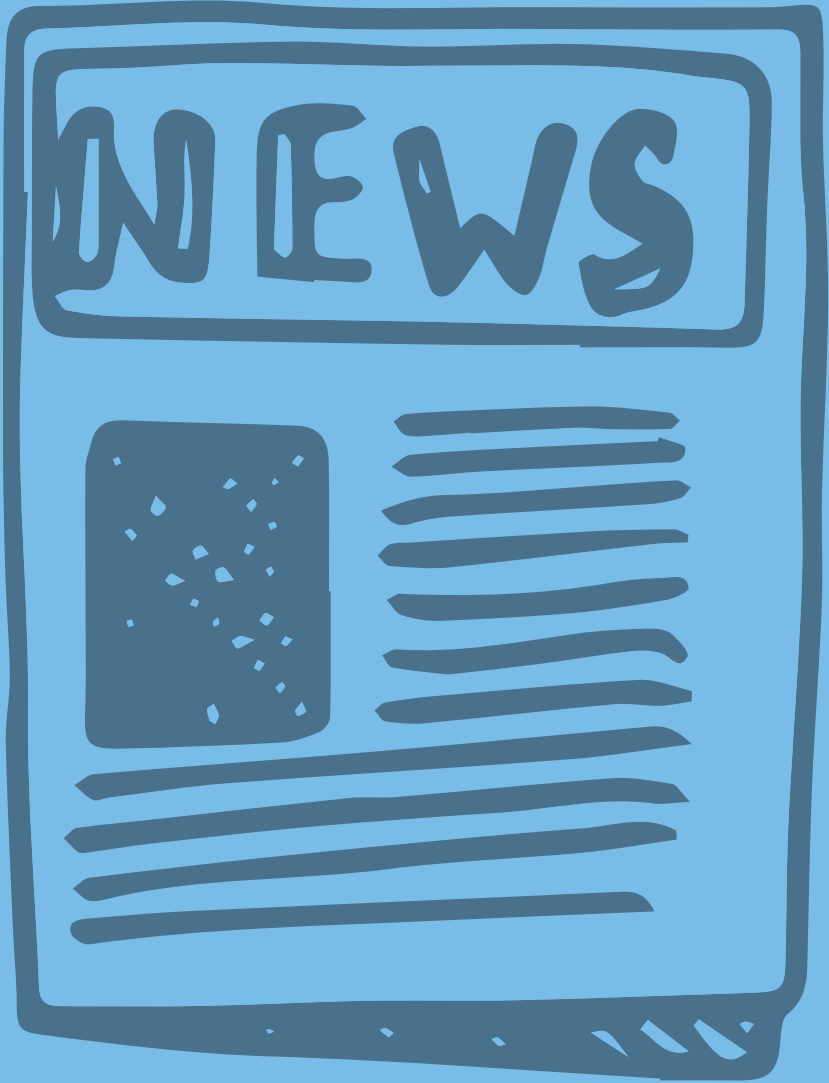
SEO – Search Engine Optimization

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Executive Summary

In order to build trust among its core supporters, target groups, and beneficiaries, as well as achieve common understanding of the organization with its stakeholders and the public it serves, an organization's public relations functions must consider the relationship between civil society and media. This function of civil society cannot be accomplished without the help of the media and a robust media relations strategy. All throughout the world, print media is losing the commercial battle, and many are battling to the death. Paradoxically, other old and digital media are attracting significant new audiences. To begin, both media and CSO organizations do not know what the other does or how this might be used to achieve organizational goals. Other concerns include a lack of knowledge and abilities as well as a lack of professional will to grasp how the other runs and operates, and its purposes and goals, among others. One of the biggest causes of miscommunication, according to all authorities, is ignorance.

Among both actors there is a limited knowledge on the activities of each-oth-

er and their contribution to democracy, their work, their priorities or how to communicate, be that civil society with the media and journalists, or the latter approaching activists about their work. Journalists do not understand what civil society does, and civil society organizations do not provide stories that sell in an increasingly commercialized media environment. Non-profits lack the knowledge and abilities to effectively communicate with journalists, as well as leverage media for advocacy. Overall, a party's inability to understand the other party's environment is one of the main reasons for the relationship's poor score. Deficient or absent knowledge of the work of each actor as well as the resulting lack of cooperation between the two further burdens the relationship that is at best sporadic or non-existent in its entirety. Lack of choices and cooperation as well as will to develop strong relationships plague both the media and civil society. As a result of this relationship or common understanding of civil society's role, journalists seldom portray CSOs as foreign-fund dependent organizations with no public interest goals and who only serve to perpetuate

the culture of reliance and exploitation. Simultaneously, CSOs have long viewed journalists and the media as ineffective ways of disseminating their message, perceiving them as profit-driven with predetermined editorial goals and little interest in covering civil problems or anything other than politics, crime, or everyday consumer stories

This guide aims at providing practical hints that might contribute to closing these miss-cooperation gap between the two, as well as build the means and know-how for an effective cooperation between CSOs and the media, as equal and co-beneficial partners. Though technical assistance, CSOs can build their media relations capacity. However, the latter must first understand the substantial benefits such outreach can bring and make an ongoing commitment to integrate communication outreach into their overall workplan and strategies.

As with any private sector company, in order to appeal to media outlets and the end consumer, CSOs have to become

adept at providing useful products (i.e., newsworthy information in the form of press releases, fact sheets or other information contain materials on key issues) to journalists and media consumers, in ways that are appropriate to the specific medium (radio, TV, social media). This guideline is aimed at providing techniques to help CSOs on how to study the environment in which media outlets work as well as the stories and topics being covered and consumed, as information is a consumer good, dependent on time and quality. This information gathering also will help CSOs to target the media outlets and platforms that reach their constituencies and the population segments they seek to influence. Subsequently, CSOs should think about ways to relate their work to those topics and to the areas of interest of those journalists and end readers/viewers. Media organizations and their products, share a story This guide will allow its readers to brainstorm on the best means and techniques to provide tailor made content to target groups of their choice.

II

Methodology

The democratic public policy decision-making process relies on an informed, educated, and engaged public. Academic experts, government officials, businesses, financial analysts, participants in a specific event, and - most importantly for this guidebook - volunteer non-profit civic groups, often known as non-governmental organizations and civil society actors, provide information to the media. This guidebook takes this factor and the role of the latter as a key premise in building its targeted instructions and practical examples.

Whether NGOs specialize in environmental issues, political corruption, children's health issues, or drug abuse, these public policy champions have two things the media needs: reliable information and a point of view. Non-governmental organizations may challenge misinformation, educate the public, set the political agenda, and develop public support for initiatives if they have reliable information. However, NGOs' facts and viewpoints are useless if they do not or cannot disseminate them to the general public. To gain access to the most important information pipe-

line - the media - NGOs must first understand the needs of the gatekeepers in the media, then learn the skills and techniques required to effectively present information to the media, and then develop strategies to mobilize their media advocacy resources.

Non-profit strategic communications can be categorized into three areas.

The first is advocacy in the media. The strategic use of mass media as a resource for advancing a social or public policy cause is known as media advocacy. It employs a combination of public relations, advertising, and grass-roots lobbying approaches. This guidebook provides an in-depth look at the role of civil society and the media, their role in a democratic society, the most effective means of cooperation between the two actors and how they can complement each-others work in order to create long term synergies.

Working with members of your own group as well as other organizations with similar interests (Networking) is the second area the guidebook focuses

on, with specific interests in inbound marketing and building a dedicated following of the organization and its initiatives. Networking can help organizations' membership base grow and inform a bigger number of individuals about what they are attempting to accomplish. It encourages the establishment of coalitions and provides avenues for collaborative planning and activity. Social media outlets allow nonprofits to collaborate on message development, share information resources, and connect activists.

The third area is producing and disseminating your own media, such as newsletters, television interviews, livestreams, photographs and many other social media products and their reach and effectiveness in active campaigns. When the media is unreceptive to the

message of an NGO, or is uncooperative, the latter can use the strategies herein to go around them. Access to mass media can be supplemented by creative media development, which can compensate for news coverage constraints. An NGO can tell its own story and explain its difficulties and initiatives through the social media they control uncontrived by finances or the editorial line of other outlets.

The guidebook also provides examples and exercises for the best practices in building marketing plans, social media strategies, communication guides for press releases, interviews, as well as a comprehensive examination of the "Save the Blue Heart of Europe" campaign and its achievements and best practices.

1



INTRODUCTION MEDIA AND CSOs

1.1 Knowing and understanding each other

It is very important that the communication process taking place between civil society and the media be all the time assessed in light of the fact that media are not only a stakeholder to CSOs, but even more so, the channel through which civil society can reach other stakeholders that are crucial to them and their mission.

Both, CSOs and the media have prejudices or stereotypes about one another. Identifying and correcting these misconceptions is a first step toward developing a mutually beneficial partnership.

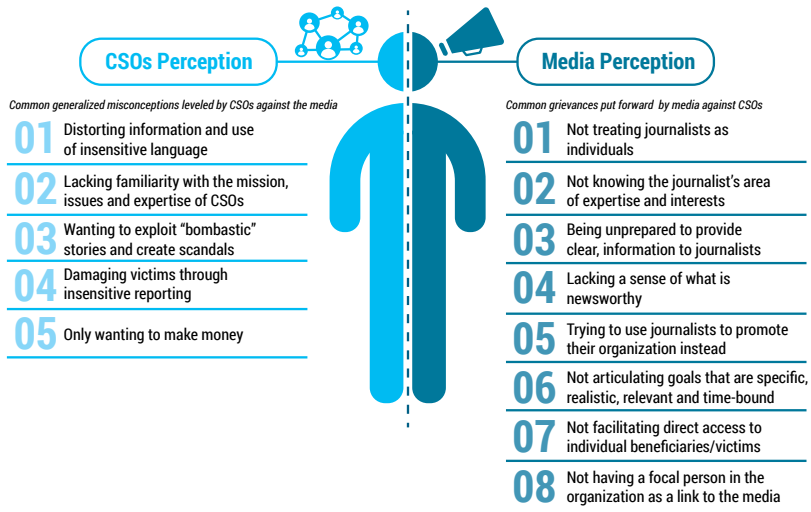


Figure 1: The perception differences between the media and CSOs

Collaboration between the media and civil society organizations has a lot of potential. CSO representatives may act as authoritative commentators and specialists in news articles, and media outlets can help CSOs get their views out to a larger audience. Addressing the connection between media and CSOs may be useful whether trying to aid a fledging media industry, build an emerging CSO community, or push a reform agenda in any sector.

CSO operations can give chances for media outlets to make abstract concerns real and newsworthy, while CSO personnel can provide professional advice on important policy issues. Media outlets may provide CSOs with a broad platform for public outreach and can aid in the transformation of isolated CSO

advocacy activities into a widespread movement including individuals from all walks of life. Finally, combining media and CSOs in projects that promote key reform agendas is a good idea.

Building Mutual Understanding

Facilitating such a union necessitates meticulous preparation informed by a thorough grasp of the settings in which both media and CSOs operate. First and foremost, provide CSOs and media outlets the opportunity to understand each other's roles in society and the challenges they face in achieving those roles. It must be understood that most times, financial vulnerability of media outlets is one of the main factors preventing long term synergies between the two actors,

as depending on the initiatives and longevity of CSO campaigns the former might be incapable to contribute to the relationship on an efficient level.

Educating CSOs and media outlets on their respective roles and responsibilities in society is insufficient to foster true synergy. It is also necessary to examine mechanisms for developing shared interests. This may be achieved in a number of ways, but two are particularly important: Including CSOs and the media in joint initiatives that benefit both parties equally, as well as promoting a long-term working relationship between CSOs and media professionals.

1.2 What and who are media and journalists

In media relations, like in any other partner connection, it's crucial to try to get to know the partner as well as possible in order to comprehend his or her behaviors and respond accordingly. Simply said, media are organizations or businesses that, among other things, create news and news articles. Journalism is one of the most essential, if not the most important, media activities. Collecting, choosing, checking, analyzing, interpreting, and organizing information (writing, editing, etc.) as well as delivering news articles is a professional activity. Journalism's primary goal and responsibility is to deliver accurate and fair reporting in the public interest, allowing all sides a voice and demonstrating a particular topic.

Media activity is largely characterized by its informative purpose, which is to **keep the public informed** about major events and to report on them. Other significant tasks of media and journalism include influencing public opinion, raising public awareness, mobilizing, educating, and, to a considerable extent, entertaining people. Media, journalists, and editors think, assess, and prioritize what is worthy of covering and publishing in the framework of such functions. As a result, the major lead and a key to success when interacting with the media is the question of what is noteworthy.



Figure 2: Role of the media

Aside from its informing, opinion-forming, educational, and amusing roles, media are defined by: medium of technology, which is a process unique to each media that is required for the creation and dissemination of news, and through which news becomes available goods. News stories and media products pass through different hierarchical structures of editors, news desks, technical departments, and so on as part of media organization, i.e. institutionalized ways of operation and task division within media houses where news stories and media products pass through different hierarchical struc-

tures of editors, news desks, technical departments, and so on.

Journalists, editors, columnists, photographers, camera operators, technical personnel, owners, and news sources are all examples of media people. When dealing with the media, the four essential media factors – function, technology, organization, and people – should be considered. It is critical to constantly respect and understand the following questions: What is the time limit for a particular news story? For specific information, who/where should I contact?

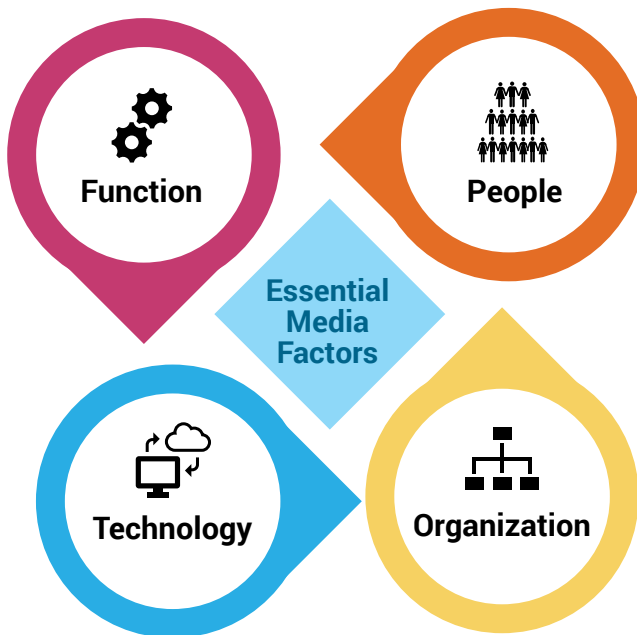


Figure 3: Essential media factors

Dealing with journalists

• Which journalists are appropriate for which stories?

It's not always easy to find the right person at a magazine. One of the best methods is to keep an eye on the news and see who is reporting what. Rather than sending a general e-mail to the news department, approach a writer you know has written on similar themes. Set up an Excel or equivalent spreadsheet to keep track of who you're talking to and how they cover your story.

You should also provide information to individual journalists well in advance of your event/launch. This ensures it gets into planning diaries and gets picked up by the right media.

• How to contact a journalist?

Always start with a personal e-mail. If you don't have the journalist's email address, call the media outlet (paper, radio, or TV) and ask for it.

Mention a recent item they authored on a similar problem if you can, and let them know who they may contact for further information. Include an editorial or a news release. Then give them a call if you haven't heard back in a day or two. Even a journalist who receives hundreds of emails every day may benefit from a kind reminder. Don't be turned off by rudeness. Journalists have a lot to do.



Figure 4: How to contact a journalist

1.3 How do different media work

Although different media outlets have similar features, they differ in how they cover events and produce news stories in terms of the time interval, the area of coverage, the themes covered, the forms of news stories, and, lastly, the varied impacts of published or televised news stories. First and foremost, CSOs should examine how various media (national, regional, and local, print vs. broadcast-ing, popular vs. qualitative and special-ized) cover CSOs and their activities.

Furthermore, CSOs should consider how to enhance the existing situation and close the gap between today’s media reality and its aspirations, goals, and expectations. As a result, we’ll look at the features of various media and try to identify their potential added value, using the table below:

Press agencies cover a wide range of issues, but primarily in the formats of short news, background pieces, and news interviews, with specific sources of information (i.e. with full names and functions of people and organizations). For many other media outlets that rely on press agencies for news, they provide timely notices and summaries of key occurrences.

Most people still read a **daily newspaper**, even if it is a “tabloid” with scandals, popular articles, enormous front-page headlines, and vivid images. Most people think that news articles that appear on the front (or back) of daily newspapers are vital.

Magazines (weeklies, fortnightlies, monthly, etc.) produce periodic issues aimed at certain audiences (women, experts, political parties, interest groups,

	TIME	AREA	TOPICS	FORMATS	EFFECTS
PRESS AGENCY	Non-Stop	International/ National/Local	Diverse	Short Format News	Main Information Service
NEWSPAPER	Daily	International/ National/Local	Diverse	News/Articles/Pho to News/ Op-Eds	Daily Readers
MAGAZINE	Periodical	Specific Target Audience	Specific Topics	Long Format News and Information.	Attractive To Reader’s Niche
RADIO	Live	International/ National/Local	Diverse	Must Tell/Short Format/Limited in Time	Daily Listening
TELEVISION	Evening News	International/ National/Local	Diverse	Must Show Not Tell/Limited in Time	Broadest Range and Appeal
SOCIAL MEDIA	Diverse	International/ National/Local	Diverse	Diverse	Widest Spread/Gaining In Popularity

Table 1: Specifics of each media outlet for news types

etc.). They have longer stories and cover more ground (articles, features, interviews, opinion pieces etc.). Their news articles are more detailed, thorough, and reader-friendly. Magazines often include more vibrant imagery and better printing, making them more enticing to readers.

Radio tries to keep up with the news “on the ground,” reporting live when possible. It features a news show every hour or day. People listen to the radio all day, at work, and in their cars. Radio is usually the first to broadcast breaking news, with other media following. Radio may also be used to mobilize people during wars and natural disasters.

The big evening or hourly news is presented on **television** daily. Whatever the target audience, the extent of coverage and subjects vary. Television is only feasible with superb live pictures, genuine field views, and personal comments from participants. Short news reports (10 seconds to 2 minutes) emphasize particular topics rather than going into complex and challenging themes. However, the general population still regards television as the most vital and powerful media.

The Internet is an important new medium that defies time, geography, subject, format, and effect limits. It provides instant access to information and documents, more engaging, imaginative, and visually appealing content presentations, and public involvement and participation (e-mail, polls, chat rooms,

forums, blogging). Our public, efficient, and free web portals help CSOs create and flourish.

1.4 What are media relations

Organizations and their representatives use media relations to communicate with journalists and editors, inform, persuade, discuss, and negotiate with them, respond to media reports, questions, and initiatives, indirectly address specific media readers and viewers, and exert public pressure on relevant actors and institutions. Cases of intense, one-way press release distribution to the media or rejecting communication in the face of harsh media queries do not fit under this definition of media relations. Similarly, ad-hoc interpersonal engagement with a journalist, does not imply a genuine media connection is established. Long-term processes of sharing messages and news, ongoing professional collaboration, pursuing similar goals and mutual interests, and adhering to the “rules of the game” are how media relations develop. CSOs and the media form alliances based on mutual trust and understanding, good experience, shared ideas and values, and a shared vision and culture.

As a result, CSOs should not assess their performance just by whether or not favorable news about them has been reported in the media. They should approach the media in a positive, constructive, and proactive manner, aiming

for fair, trustworthy, and consistent cooperation and partnership. As a result, it is essential that CSOs prepare, plan, and think forward about how to interact with the media in order to add value to our efforts. Overall, media relations are: **A two-way, open-ended information flow communication that is strategic, methodical, efficient, and accountable. A dynamic, long-term connection!**

1.5 The main media outlets: how to target them

Before you can design your message using one of the instruments of public relations, such as a news release or media advisory, you must first establish the sorts of media outlets you are targeting. Here’s a look at the many types of media sources and how to interact with them.

Newspapers

Local newspapers, both daily and weekly, are wonderful tools for disseminating information about a particular activity, service, event, or concern.

The city editor or managing editor covers general news. The rest of the beat is generally handled by a specialist. The media outlet’s website usually lists beat reporters and their contact data. Send a news release or media notice to the Calendar of Activities editor two to three weeks before your event. If your event or topic lends itself to photography, notify the photo desk. Weekly and local newspapers are typically understaffed, therefore beat writers and photographers may be unavailable. Take photos of your event and email them along with a post-event assessment.

Television

Local TV news stations cover national



Figure 5: Editorial content of newspapers

and regional news, but often “localize” it. Television is an emotive medium, delivering messages in short, punchy sound bites - “to the point” information conveyed quickly. Viewers respond to face, voice, and attitude. As the “expert,” you should convey ease and competence in the subject matter being addressed, and avoid using industry jargon or technical phrases. Tell an engaging story with graphics. If a large audience is expected, a reporter may be sent to cover the event live. There may be a single news director or beat reporter. In advance of an event, send a press release or media notice to TV stations.

Radio

Radio stations frequently play news portions in the morning or afternoon drive. 10-30 second radio advertising can be repeated. Radio stations tape and broadcast interviews. When a large number of people are interested in your event, certain radio stations, like television stations, may broadcast live from it. Since radio is an auditory experience, reporters try to construct a mental image for listeners. A cheerful, engaging interviewee who can create images with words in short sound bites is required. Prior to events, send a press release or media alert to radio stations.

Magazines

Magazines are ideal for longer, more in-depth feature articles. There are several lifestyle and business journals covering local news, companies, and trendy topics. Write to national trade periodicals

with a similar focus if you have news or activities that would interest people in your field. Press releases and media alerts must be carefully distributed because magazine publications are usually scheduled three to six months in advance.

The Internet and Social Media

In addition to members and subscribers, an organization or person can utilize social media to reach a larger audience. Use social media to comment on or share content, connect with influential people, and follow fans and advocates. Images, videos, and infographics are great debate openers. Try using a syndication tool like Hootsuite to repost your tweets to Facebook and other relevant social sharing sites - this may assist maintain frequency. Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, and blogs are the most popular social media sites. It's not required to be on every one; instead, select the ones that help you achieve your goals.

1.6 Why the media are important for CSOs

Frequently, CSOs' activities, projects, and efforts are neglected, misinterpreted, or distorted by the media. Several Western Balkan, as well as Albanian CSOs, share similar views, concerns, and anxiety about the media.¹

Here are a few:

¹ https://seenpm.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/Resilience-research-e_book-all-reports-media-trust-with-CIP-Final-1.pdf

- The media is uninterested in CSOs' activities.
- They only care about emotions.
- Journalists lack competence to cover various CSO issues.
- In many cases, they express CSO problems in a superficial manner with mistakes and a political slant. CSOs lack funding and time to interact with the media.
- CSOs regularly submit media news clips, which are either ignored or used to gather information.
- No one attends CSO press conferences.
- Journalists only call when they have anything to report on CSOs.

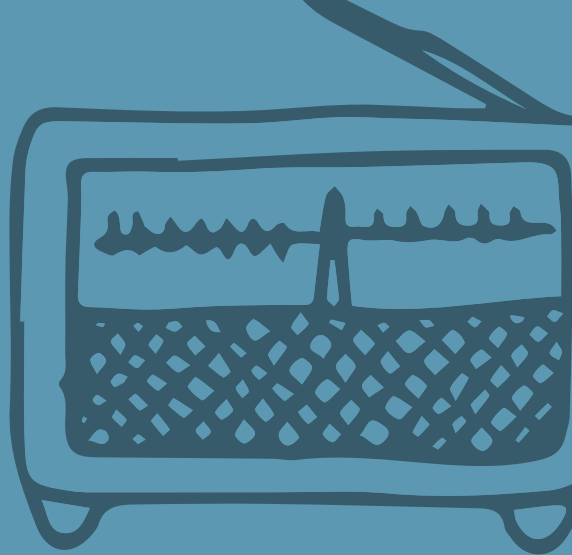
We all live in a media age. Some call it "media reality". We learn the most about our world via the media. Many occurrences are only documented and published post-facto. Civil society groups are intrinsically related to and dependent on the media in their various fields of work and social action. Media reports provide CSOs with essential information about current events in their fields and allied disciplines (internationally, domestically, professionally etc.). In addition, the media, is vital in promoting CSOs' activities, stance on

certain issues, and civic events. CSOs use the media to engage with members, supporters, clients, donors, government officials, and influential people.

At the same time, the media are unique public platforms that allow for public debate, competing opinions, and politics. Media representatives, journalists, editors, and columnists are influential opinion makers because they support CSOs' causes. As a result, media can help or hinder CSOs in their efforts to persuade and organize bigger audiences.

This manual seeks to address the most common issues, doubts, and misconceptions regarding the media as well as it is meant as a means to help CSOs deal with the media. However, we must bear in mind that it does not claim to provide a consistent recipe or a magic formula for getting on the front pages of newspapers or the first minutes of major television news. In order to achieve effective and quality media relations, CSOs should rely on creativity, innovation, flexibility, openness, and excitement.

2



WORKING WITH LEGACY/ TRADITIONAL MEDIA

2.1 How to communicate with the media

The CSOs' interactions with the media and journalists should always be conducted in a professional, cooperative, and courteous manner. As previously emphasized, it is critical to know and comprehend the partners, as well as to keep the following in mind:

All parties observe some unwritten "*rules of the game*" while com-

municating with the media, which should always be established in advance. The quality of connections and degree of trust between a CSO and an individual journalist, is crucial to "quietly" adherence to the regulations. In most situations, as professional communicators, CSOs speak with the journalist "on

the record.” This indicates that they are aware of, and agree to, the possibility of the information given to the journalist in such a discussion being published as such, and that they will be cited as a source with the full name and position. Furthermore, CSOs shall only use the phrase “off the record” in media communications in extraordinary circumstances, because journalists who follow such an agreement are unable to publish the material given and are therefore left without a news story.

Try to strike a distinct, personal tone here, be communicative, persistent, correct, and reasonable, and sell your narrative, but never be **irritating, irritable, or aggressive**. Always remember that you’re forming a long-term, balanced connection with a certain journalist and the media. We must be careful not to take things too personally. **Journalists should never be lied to! If you lie, you will be discovered sooner or later, and the journalist will no longer trust you!** Say something like, “I’m not sure, I’ll check and call you back when I have the information I need.” Prepare a quick introduction of yourself, your organization, or a project, initiative, or issue you wish to offer to the journalist in advance. Always keep in mind the message you want to send and why you want to send it, and try to target your communication. Also, in any situation, be prepared for an “on-the-record” chat with the journalist.

2.2 How to efficiently organize media relations

Any organized work with the media begins with each CSO asking themselves, “Who are we?” What is the purpose of our mission? What kind of impact do we want to have on the world? What are we attempting to communicate? We may gain a better understanding of ourselves, establish our identity, and clarify our goals and objectives by answering such questions. Starting with ourselves helps us to plan and organize our media interactions more efficiently.

As a result, the first step should be to prepare the “identity card”, which includes a basic presentation of the organization, vision, descriptions of activities and projects, contact information, and a visual presentation (logo of the organization, relevant photos, etc.) that can be sent or passed to the media at any time. The so-called **press kit**, which comprises current information and press releases, background material about projects, our pictures, and so on, might be modified for specific media events.

CSOs should watch developments in important surroundings, including the media, while focused on the organization. They should pay attention to which media cover the organization, projects, initiatives, and concerns, as well as how news items about them are created and presented in the media, as well as the focus and context provided to them. CSOs should also examine where we

want to appear or be presented – in which media, on which pages, on which programs – what type of news items we can give, what media articles elicit response, and so on. Additionally, they should file pertinent media publications in the form of press clippings and preserve them in our media archive for a better evaluation (including photo, audio and TV material, media questions).

This will enable for not just feedback on actions, but also for analysis and assessment of the CSO's media activity, as well as proactive and positive reactions, as well as planning and changing the media strategies. CSOs are required to have a media address for effective media communication and work, which is a list of journalists and editors who have previously covered the latter, or who are vital to the CSO's organization. This list should be current, with precise names, positions, addresses, phone numbers, and e-mail addresses. As a result, keeping up with current media developments, new journalist and editor hires, and maintaining up-to-date and accurate media list book, which the CSOs should monitor and utilize regularly, is critical.

On the other hand, we should name and designate spokespersons, i.e., a **person in charge of media relations** who is available for media calls, questions, quotes, and interviews; people, project managers, and experts within the organization who are willing and competent to speak to the media about specific issues and projects. Once it is officially

announced a person as a spokesman or a contact person for further information on a project, he or she should be available to the media at all times, with accessible phone numbers and e-mail addresses, and be prepared to speak with them on the record. In any situation, the organization should communicate with unified messaging, a unified voice, and a unified image in order to be clear, well-understood, and appreciated. While possessing all of the tools essential for effective media relations management, one needs continuously engage in extra activities in order to operate effectively with the media. In this regard, remember to: Look and follow the media: the coverage and how, what topics are relevant, interesting, and newsworthy for the media; talk among yourselves, coordinate, and brainstorm in a larger team: discuss how to present a certain issue so that it is well understood by the media and the general public, what media questions to expect, how to plan for specific media events.

2.3 How to Create an Effective Legacy Media Plan

Any group seeking media attention for its cause must have a comprehensive media plan in place. With no media strategy, you would spend every day reacting to the agenda rather than influencing it. Press secretary or media advocate for a non-profit organization may need to undertake an internal campaign to educate colleagues on the value of an active, planned, and directed

media strategy. You must make it clear to your colleagues that mere mention of your organization in press coverage regarding your problems is insufficient.

is high exposure and media attention to your organization? If media coverage is vital, time and resources must be allocated to media strategy development.

This section of this guide focuses on the strategic media campaign planning process. A media advocate should always devise a complete plan, whether she or he is creating a long-term media campaign or a one-time media event. The following outline will help you to think about and create your plan:

If the organization values media relations, the public relations person (or staff, if large enough) must be included in organizational planning sessions. To maximize success, event and program planners must work closely with the public relations team from the start. Developing your organization's media strat-

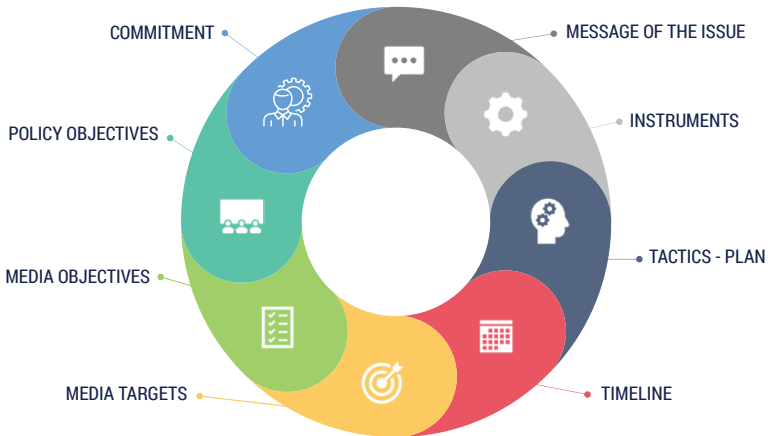


Figure 6: Strategic approach of setting up a media campaign

a) Commitment of the organization

The organization must commit money and time. Press relations should be ongoing rather than one-off. It's important to think of working with the media as a campaign with the same amount of strategy, support, and execution. "How important is media coverage to you?" must be the first inquiry. The media isn't always important. How significant

egy and activities should be part of your overall plan. Set up and running a press requires simple tools. Create letterhead and images; generate lists; print kits; and send releases. Money is needed for phone calls, faxes, mailings, and renting spaces for press conferences. Investing in public relations will increase your organization's media exposure.

b) Policy Objectives

After the first phase, next step is to choose the cause on which the media advocacy activities will be focused. For major organizations, there are assigned each issue to a media marketing team. Determine the media advocacy campaign's policy and media objectives. Defining the policy objectives will help you target the correct people, communicate effectively, design communication tools and tactics, keep campaign focus, and evaluate campaign success. To define the campaign's policy objectives, the media team should consider the following:

- O What is the campaign's aim for your organization?*
- O Is it a campaign to raise public awareness of a certain issue?*
- O A campaign to influence pending legislation in the national, regional, or municipal legislatures?*
- O Is it a political campaign to place a topic on the political agenda?*
- O Is our aim rational and justifiable?*
- O Is our aim realistic and within our institution's expertise?*

c) Media objectives

At this stage of the campaign planning process, it is worth to specify the targeted media coverage your campaign seeks. This means the selection if the campaign will target regional newspapers, radio, and television; national radio or billboards; local news outlets; article placement; or a mix of media. You must also decide if the campaign will be long-term, developing media attention over time, or only for one day

or week. Finally, it is important to first define and identify the targeted audience before selecting specific media objectives.

d) Media targets

After determining the demographic target, it is crucial to find out their preferred media channels as well. These are your campaign's media targets. These targeted media channels can reach your target population. Once the right media outlets are chosen, there is a need to discover the reporters, editors, and producers to pitch, fax, and invite to press conferences.

- *When trying to persuade activists or community leaders, remember that politicians usually read editorial pages.*
- *Look for magazines that target certain vocations. Your campaign may have many target audiences.*

Decide which media targets are best for each of your target audiences. The target audience of a media outlet: Your media targets are determined by common sense and research. Examine the offerings at your local newspaper stand. Foreign language newspapers target a specific population, whereas general news magazines target a much broader, less defined readership. Look for periodicals and newspapers that look to target the same demographic as your campaign. Watching TV or listening to the radio will help you identify program types, focus, and target audience.

If for the purposes of a campaign we are targeting a specific community or decision-making members of that community, one should ask himself what kind of media do they consume. Do they read daily newspapers, specific periodicals linked to their workplace, hobby magazines, TV shows, or tabloids? The feedback you get should direct your efforts. Research: If you're unsure about a media outlet's target demographic, call their headquarters and ask about their circulation, distribution, and coverage areas (income level, age, gender etc.). This exercise will result in the finetuning of the means of dissemination of a message, with tailormade mechanisms of approach to the target.

e) Message creation Defining the problem

To garner support for their campaigns, media advocates must tailor their messages to their target audiences' interests, values, and experiences.

An initial core of general public supporters who quickly respond to the initiative's themes is typical. For example, a campaign to save a local endangered animal species is likely to attract enthusiastic support from environmentalists. A campaign's responsibility in widening its supporter base is to design and use issues that appeal to non-supporters' intellect and emotions. The media advocate for endangered animals must figure out how to reach a larger audience. This is called "message development" or "problem framing". Your cam-

paign will be more successful if you use ideals like privacy and freedom of choice to appeal to all political parties. The initiative might be linked to liberal or conservative beliefs.

Symbols and language that capture and comprehensively express common public ideals influence public perceptions. To promote public support for policy objectives, press spokespersons must choose and explain the most effective symbols and language. Fencing the issue is the method by which advocates transmit their message to maximize positive values and minimize negative ones. Using resources efficiently and effectively while minimizing environmental impacts, the phrases "environmental protection" and "environmental efficiency" have radically different meanings to the general public. Many people associate conservation with constrained lives, lesser economic growth, and so forth. Environmental efficiency, on the other hand, refers to using technology to improve society while preserving the environment.

News headlines, talking points, and quotes: Your concerns seldom receive favorable media treatment. Identify the type of publicity you want, and train yourself and your spokespeople to effectively connect with reporters.

Begin by asking your colleagues (including leaders and policy experts) to pretend for a minute that they are in a position to write an article or create a

television newscast on your issue. Given the messages and frame you've chosen, consider the following:

- Would you like to see any specific headlines?
- Can you tell me what you want the opening paragraph to say?
- Would you like any quotes or data included in the article?
- Would you like to see any experts or human-interest tales in your article?

The answers to these questions should help you decide what resources to disseminate, how to represent your point of view, and what "talking points" to use in every interview on the issue. Sounds and quotes. Remember that lengthy, complicated replies will not be as successful as brief, to-the-point responses. Because radio and television news programs are quick, your message must be simple and clear.

Repeat the preceding drill in the opposite direction. Consider the worst-case scenarios for headlines. You must be ready to put your best foot forward in the face of setback or failure.

f) Instruments

Media advocates employ reports, lawsuits, legislative acts, elections, meetings, and public events to produce news. One of the most important roles a press secretary may play is advising an organization's workers on media-friendly technologies. A skilled press secretary knows how to ask the following:

- *Can this technical report be made non-technical?*
- *Is it possible for the speakers at this forthcoming conference to address the current public concern?*
- *Do we have any noteworthy internal information?*

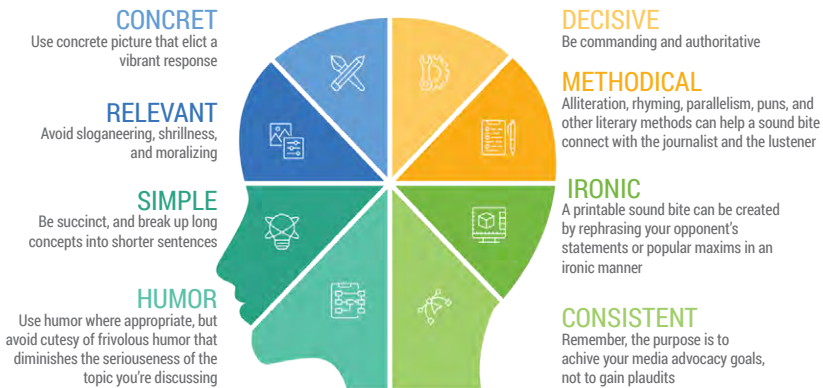


Figure 7: *The hints for underpinning effective sound bites and talking points*

In order to make a point about the issue, there is a need to collect and disseminate facts that will be of interest to reporters and the public. Your issue may also be endorsed publicly by a celebrity or well-known intellectual, political, or national figure.

g) Tactics: putting together a comprehensive plan

You know your policy goal, your target demographic, and their preferred media platforms. You've decided on the best manner to express your concern. A negative response to your campaign has been planned for, and a variety of news-generating instruments have been constructed or discovered. So now what? The next step is to establish a media strategy. Similar to a soccer coach creating a game plan for his squad of athletes, it is comparable to a media strategy in that it details how to communicate with the press. Prelimi-

nary choices for policy and media objectives should inform your plan as well as your message and target audience.

Local reporters, opinion sections, and talk programs are all targets of a well-planned media strategy. Flexible and spontaneous planning is required for a successful media advocacy campaign. Rapid and imaginative response to shifting news conditions is required for media advocacy. Opportunities are what characterize media advocacy. P.R. pros are always looking for news items to utilize in interviews, radio spots, letters to the editor, or media events.

h) Timetable

Once the strategic media plan is set, there is a need to create a timeline. A timeline is a list of events and the preparations required to make those events happen. A timeline is extremely useful.

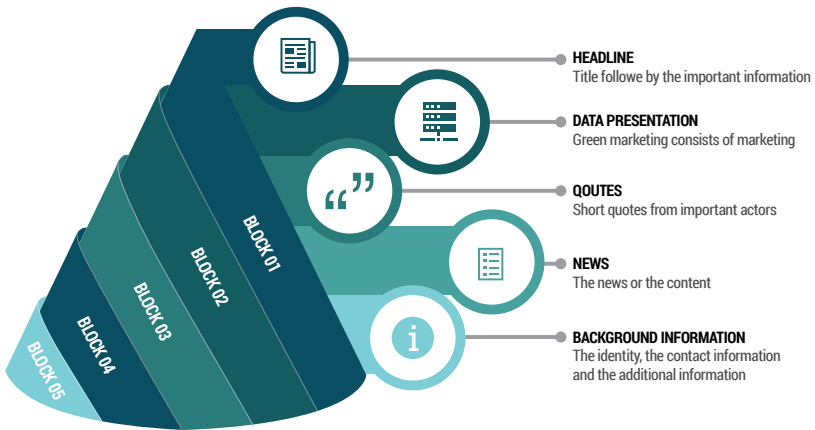


Figure 8: Effective press release components

It allows a public relations or media relations professional to keep track of the different tasks that need to be accomplished in order for a media event to be effective and successful. A timetable enables you to consider every detail of the press conference. A timeline helps you stay on track so that the event goes off as planned.

The time it takes to prepare an article, the days it takes to reserve a press conference space in advance, and the deadline for putting an advertisement in a magazine must all be factored into the timeframe. Keep in mind that a media strategy is a complex plan with pieces moving at different speeds. Without a timeframe, a press secretary may discover that she has spent three weeks arranging a press conference but has neglected to complete any of the tasks required to carry out the remainder of the strategy. *A press secretary's most effective organizational tool is the timeline. Do not dismiss it.*

2.4 Tools and techniques of media relations

Here, we'll look at some examples of media communication that adhere to core journalistic principles and are tailored to news stories and events. They help CSOs to be more efficient in their communication with the media and in having their messages disseminated as intended since they are favorably received by journalists and the media.

2.4.1 Press release

This is a short and effective news piece. It must be instructive, interesting, brief, basic, and concise. It should answer four basic questions (4W): who, what, where, and when. Press releases follow an inverted pyramid structure, with the most **important information** coming first (the "lead"), followed by **data presented** in order of importance, not chronologically. You can add interesting **quotes from important actors** in a press release, but keep them short.

To entice the reader, the title (5-7 words) should stress the "**news**" or "**content**" of the article. Lastly, the "**additional information**" is worth to be inserted in the end. This section contains information that can be used as background or related to the specific topic of the press release. The **top of a press release** should provide the **headline**, second title and then the publication's location and date, as well as the organization's logo. Detailed **contact information** should be supplied at the end of the release. A news release should not exceed one page (30 lines, 1,5 paragraph space). In most cases, press releases may be issued immediately ("for immediate distribution"). In severe cases, we might provide it to the media ahead of an event, speech, or report release, urging them to keep it until a certain date.

A press release is also known as a press statement, a media notice/invitation, or a right to react. An open letter is a writ-

ten statement prepared in advance and read in front of the cameras (length is determined by available media space - around 20 seconds of spoken words).

The media notice/invitation gives technical details about a media event while also enticing journalists to go with a little Why. The right to respond extends to information about the organization that is inaccurate or false. If you want to correct something in a journalist's work, you should do it accurately, clearly, and concisely. You may send a press release by mail, fax, or email, keeping in mind deadlines for particular news items and the expressed interest of a single journalist or media outlet. A press release can be used in a press kit and at news conferences.

However, sending a press release does not guarantee publication. Even if we send our press release to 50 or more sources, it will not be read or published. For a news piece, journalists will need live communication, analysis of the news presented, and more instruction.

2.4.2 Press conference

In this pre-recorded media event, speakers give messages and answer media enquiries (with direct quotes). Justifications for such a decision include:

1. The information you want to express is complex and requires debate.
2. Emphasize the significance of your press release. As a result, timing the

press conference is crucial (for example at the launch or at the end of an important project, with remarkable achievement, visit, results, in crisis situation etc.).

Decent **topics, message, speakers**, and even a good press conference **location** will attract media attention. Above all, avoid wasting reporters' time and be ready for questions. Despite its common neglect, a media briefing is as effective (if not more so) than a press conference. Meet and interact with a reporter or group of reporters to get background information (no direct quotes). It's a great way to get to know them in person and keep the lines of communication open while introducing new topics, new information, new specialists, and their opinions.

CSOs should plan and prepare for a press conference carefully and well in advance. Activities should follow these steps (Figure 9):

A minimum of one week prior to the conference

- Check, choose, and book a convenient day and time that does not conflict with comparable media events;
- Check, choose, and reserve a suitable location and room in a convenient location that meets technical requirements;
- Prepare and distribute a media notice/invitation that clearly states where and when the conference will be held, who will be speaking, what the primary topic and concerns will be, why journalists should be interested in attending, and who should be contacted for more in-

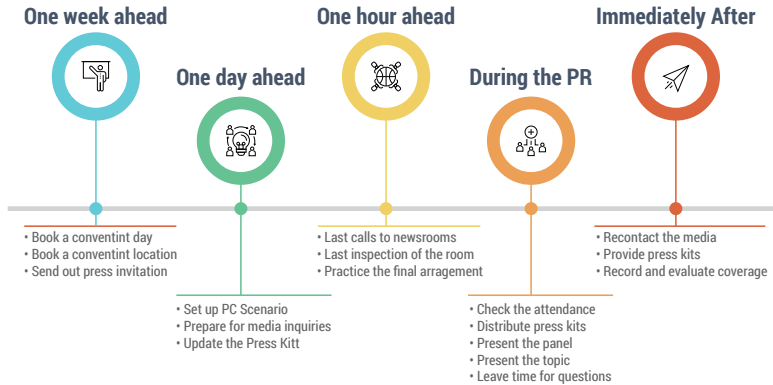


Figure 9: A simple scheme of the Press Conference tactics

formation and questions; and

- Prepare press kits that include the organization's identity card, documents related to the press conference's theme, a list of speakers' names and positions, photo material, and so on.

At least one day in advance

- Coordination and setting of a press conference scenario;
- Prepare for media inquiries and brainstorm with a bigger group;
- Press kits should be updated;
- Make final arrangements in the conference room, seating arrangements for speakers and journalists, name badges for speakers, background (logo, color, flags, flowers), and refreshments (usually served before the conference).

That morning

Make last phone calls to newsrooms; Make a thorough inspection of the conference room; Prepare for the press conference by practicing it.

At the press conference

Hand out an attendance list and ask reporters to confirm their attendance. Distribute press kits. Greet the journalists, introduce them, and summarize the speakers. Speakers make brief statements, then media questions. Be specific; do not try to cover the organization's or field's larger challenges. Talk clearly, sit up straight, face the audience, make eye contact, and try to look nice for the cameras. Expect 30-45 minutes, with time for questions! Allow plenty of time for questions. Record the meeting (audio, video) and snap photos for later review. Thank the media for arriving, say them farewell, and urge them to contact you.

Immediately after the press conference

Keep in touch with the media. Provide press kits (a press release or a transcript of the press conference) to essential reporters who couldn't attend the press conference. Watch and record the coverage, store the media (clippings, recordings, photos), and evaluate!

2.4.3 Interview

This is an on-the-record interview for the media. It may be used to gather information and post quotes, or it can be used to publish questions and answers. When we plan an interview, we should know what we expect from it. Do we want to enlighten and inform people? Or do we aim to explain misunderstandings in our industry? Maybe we just want to make an appearance so people know us, so we can put a face on our organization and give it substance? In any case, we must agree to an interview on the record, meaning that everything we say can be published. As a consequence, we must prepare for the interview by knowing our mission, current priorities, and core message. Prepare a brief statement about the organization or project (1-2 words, maximum

20 seconds) and three crucial aspects (“islands of safety”).

Also, evaluate the interview’s media target audience (i.e. general or specific, like: children, women, elderly, experts etc.). Our messaging, language, and communication style should be audience-specific. We could also ask about the media outlet’s features: Is this a print interview? If it’s for TV, will it be live or taped? Will we meet the journalist in person or will we connect with him by phone or Zoom?

During the interview, you should adhere to a few easy yet crucial guidelines:

- Prepare yourself. Take command of the situation!*
- Have faith in yourself!*
- Tell it like it is!*



Figure 10: Pros and cons of an interview

Because it is in of high interests to conduct a technically and content-wise excellent interview, you should carefully verify and take care of the following:

2.4.4 Media events

These are larger, more coordinated gatherings that the media covers. Pro-

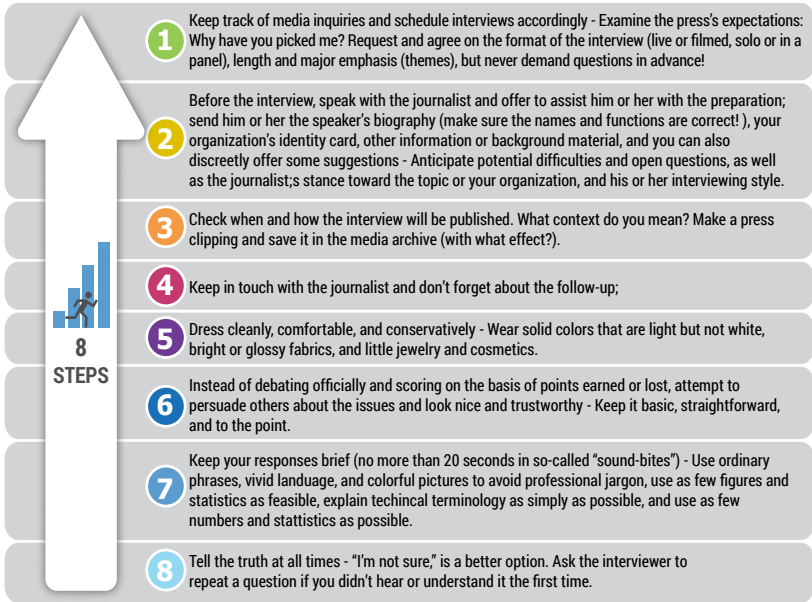


Figure 11: 8 Steps to an effective interview



Figure 12: What matters on TV

tests and rallies as well as press trips and other media events are examples. Consider how to attract the media and how to fulfill their basic demands for news stories before planning and staging such a major event. Keeping in mind the newsworthiness requirements, is worth to design a media event that is innovative, inventive, and creative. It is important to ask new questions, look at current issues from new angles, include famous personalities, and convey human tales. Priority one should be good picture and TV stuff!

CSOs should plan a media-friendly program from the outset, allowing journalists to cover our events more correctly. Photo ops, press releases, press briefings, and press conferences should all be scheduled. Remember that the media works on a tight schedule, so allow them enough time to perform their jobs (they will spend time to get to the location, attend the media event, press conference etc., take the interviews, still they will have to get back and finish their news stories on time). The organizer should also decide on the media's "regime" in advance: will the media be free to attend the whole event ("open to the public"), or will there be limits ("closed to the public"), requiring them to register in advance? If there are any limitations on the ground, you must inform the media thoroughly and swiftly so they do not feel left in the dark or excluded for particular reasons. These unfavorable assumptions would very certainly show up in the news articles.

it is also good to know in advance the technological needs various media will have (i.e. sound system, lights, electricity plugs and wires, podium for photographers and TV cameramen, satellite dish and links, parking for special media vans). Journalists should have the facilities to conduct their work during the event without hinderance. Organizers should also plan for briefings, press conferences, and interviews. Journalists must recognize the media relations specialist/officer and direct any technical or content difficulties to him. To avoid

unmanageable circumstances or duplicated roles, other team members should have clear task allocation and coordination. A media event should be organized and prepared similarly to a news conference. The following actions should be taken in organizational activities:

Prior to the media appearance

The media notice/invitation must include a comprehensive event program, exact directions to the venue, information about media rules and accreditations, as well as a contact person for extra information. Help journalists prepare for the event and topic: Organize a media briefing, invite experts, provide background information, pre-distribute documents, and offer story suggestions and ideas. Confirm the media's technology requirements before planning an information booth, work area, and press conference. In case you forget anything or something breaks, you still have time to get it or fix it!

During the press conference

Examine the info-point for journalists. Allow for on-the-spot press briefings, interviews, and photo and broadcast opportunities (particularly with handshakes, new location openings, award presentations, and other dynamic events on the ground); Hire a photographer/cameraman, write a pamphlet or publication about the event, and update your website.

3



INBOUND MARKETING

Today's largest marketing challenge is also its biggest opportunity: organizations can reach their target audience via a variety of digital media, which sometimes requires extensive trial and error in order to succeed. That's why so many NGOs are stuck in a marketing limbo: they want to adopt new marketing concepts that works, but first they need to show results. How can nonprofit marketers strike the right balance while promoting new

initiatives? The goal is to focus on a few key marketing methods that prioritize impact and long-term audience engagement over quick wins. Rather than relying on outbound marketing strategies like buying ads, email addresses, leads, and direct mail, encourage your audiences to come to you. Inbound marketing solves this issue. Inbound marketing has five dimensions that can help you reach these objectives:

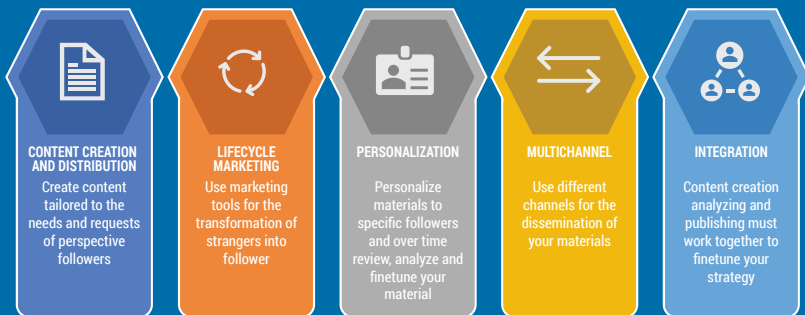


Figure 13: Steps of inbound marketing



Figure 14: *Inbound Methodology*

As a result of connecting these pillars, inbound marketing creates a marketing plan that is unified, workflow-driven, and quantifiable.

3.1 Simple Steps to Growing Your Community, Building Influence, and Attracting More Members

Construct a Framework to Support the Inbound Methodology

Inbound marketing success depends on connecting the customer journey dots. The best way to create your own plan is to understand how inbound marketing's four primary actions connect awareness, engagement, and conversion.

Inbound marketing is a cycle. Using content as a foundation, you may build scalable, long-term distribution channels for your nonprofit. What's the

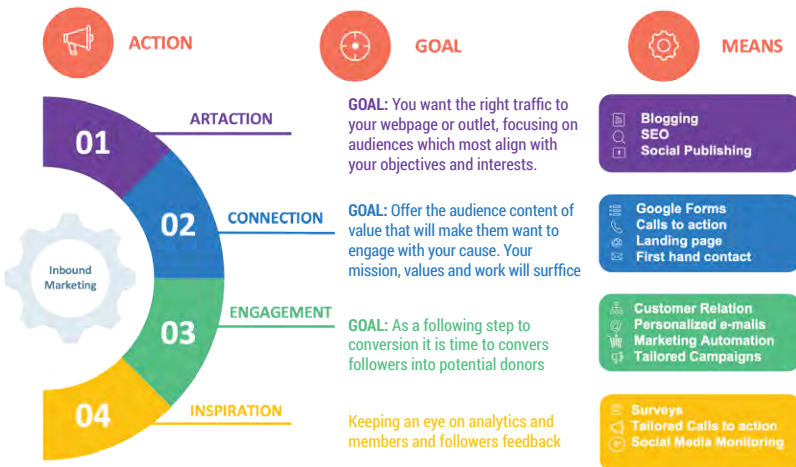


Figure 15: *Inbound marketing components*

outcome? Higher marketing impact at reduced cost—the ideal benefit for an organization with limited resources.

Create audience personas that let people connect

Create forms on your website with fields for researching your characters. You can also interview members, donors, and external people to uncover patterns. Here's a simple three-step process:



INTERVIEW YOUR STAKEHOLDERS:

Conduct interviews to ensure that your messaging and value proposition are resonating with your target audience. Make sure to get input from a variety of people, including donors, volunteers, past members, new members, and long-time members. To see many, hidden aspects to your audience's story, you'll want to use this blend. Here's a quick rundown of what you'll need to

get started with qualitative interviews:

- Take a look at your neighborhood's database. Create groupings by identifying patterns based on shared qualities.
- Pick a few people from each of those groups to join you (maybe 2-3). Schedule 30–45-minute calls with opt-ins, then keep reaching out to fresh people until your bandwidth is exhausted.
- Make a recording of your calls so you can look for patterns and introduce new groups you might not have seen before.



CHECK YOUR DATA:

You've probably gathered a lot of information on your members and stakeholders, especially specifics about what prompted them to become engaged, in addition to the qualitative research you're undertaking. Cross-checking your data with industry journals and trend studies is one way to address this question. Take a look at the sector-spe-

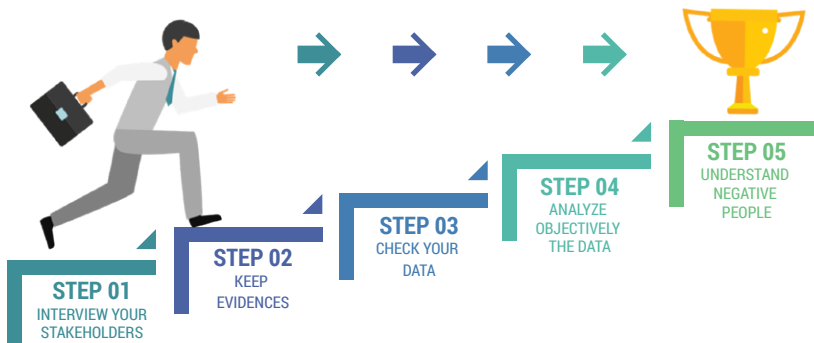


Figure 16: Simple steps for a successful marketing plan

cific studies that your donors and leadership team are already looking at to get started.



UNDERSTAND NEGATIVE PERSONAS:

You'll know who makes a strong member of your campaign community by now, based on internal and external data you've gathered, analyzed, and validated. You'll also be able to tell who doesn't. Your nonprofit's teams have a finite amount of resources. Make sure you're focusing your efforts on the regions with the best return on investment. This emphasis will ensure that you always reach your most valuable audience and pursue a strategic direction for your organization.

Create systems that are based on your personas and database data.

Less general identities and audience profiles are better. Because audiences' attention spans are so short, organizations with the most tailored messages and value propositions will win. Consider your contact database and personalities as live, breathing entities (we're all people behind the computer screen). Here are some ideas:

- **EVENT-BASED RESEARCH:** When registering for an event, have participants fill out amusing facts about themselves.
- **INDUSTRY RESEARCH:** Compare your own data to publicly available data-

sets (from the INSTAT, academic journals, or other CSOs, for instance).

· **YOUR CONTENT:** Discover what and why your audience reads. Keep track of your audience's engagement to determine their preferred messages. At this stage, conversion optimization comes into play. Use forms and content offerings to correctly segment your lists. Automate as much data collection as you can, and do regular sanity checks. This iterative approach keeps your inbound marketing initiatives current and relevant.

Keep a close eye on your Search Engine Optimization (SEO) strategy.

Every day, people ask Google how to join the community. Don't you want your organization/campaign to be the first to respond? Search engine rankings are the result of diligent planning known as search engine optimization (SEO). It refers to techniques that help your website rank higher in organic search results, making it more visible to those searching for your brand, product, or service on search engines like Google. Search engines look for title tags, keywords, image tags, internal link structure, and inbound links. Search engines, on the other hand, factor in site structure and design, visitor behavior, and other off-site factors when deciding your site's ranking.

When planning out your content, make sure to prioritize SEO as a core part of your process by focusing on the following:

- o **KEYWORD RESEARCH:** Make a list of significant, relevant themes based on your organization's knowledge. It helps to think of these difficulties as broad buckets. Start with 5-10 relevant buckets for your organization, then use those to identify specific keywords later. Still having issues? Consider your member avatars for a moment. Consider what they could be looking for.
- o **ON-PAGE SEO:** Create a list of critical, relevant topics based on your nonprofit's knowledge. It helps to think of these difficulties as broad buckets. Start with 5-10 relevant buckets for your organization, then use those to identify specific keywords later. Still having issues? Consider your member avatars for a moment. Consider what they could be looking for.

Your content must be easily accessible. When done correctly, SEO can provide free traffic to your organization. However, you must guarantee that your content is clearly linked to your audience's interests, educational needs, and Google queries. It's important to be found, but so is quality.

Educate and Convert Your Visitors to Learn More About Them

Building an audience starts with premium content—especially if it includes offers tailored to your target demographic. If you're paying to get visitors to your website, you'll want to find ways to learn more about them and ask for their consent to market to them in the

future. This connection requires more value and information in the form of offers and magnets.

The idea is simple: you're encouraging people to learn more about and engage with your nonprofit. The goal is to provide more value and information. If you want individuals to fill out a form, offer them an eBook, webinar, whitepaper, or case study in exchange. Make sure the materials, as well as the landing pages, are engaging to new audiences. Create lead nurturing sequences and workflows that encourage long-term connection with your nonprofit by asking survey questions that may help future marketing efforts. Finally, focus on the tiniest part of your landing page: your call to action.

Today's viewers are curious, and a simple "click here" will not capture their interest. Be specific in your calls to action. This stage will help you reach and optimize your first conversion goal.

Nurture Subscribers from Converts

People may be interested in your NGO or cause but not ready to make a financial or time commitment. If you push them too hard too quickly, you risk coming across as pushy or off-putting in your conversations. That's why you need lead nurturing programs. Essentially, you'll use workflows to send an automated e-mail response to visitor actions or information they've provided. This data will help you segment and

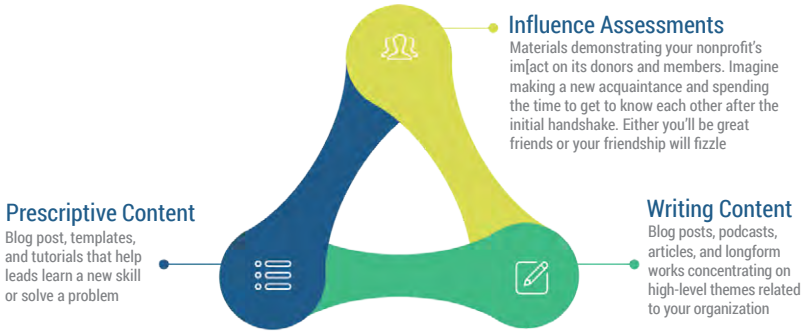


Figure 17: *Converting subscribers into converts*

build your e-mail lists so you can deliver relevant messages to the appropriate individuals at the right time.

The objective is to minimize overselling and educate early on. How should we spend in audience education? Here are some content ideas to help you convert email list subscribers into members and donors.

Re-engagement should be prioritized

The finest donors are those who already know and like your nonprofit. After all, you've worked hard to establish an audience, recruit members, and collect donations. In the end, inbound marketing is about building long-term relationships. Consider implementing referral programs, educational pieces for current members, segmented mailings, networking opportunities, or even a package that teaches them how to start their own fundraising campaign. You may always go back to step 3 and interview your present community to

make sure your content strategy is on point. Then analyze your data to find your most valued lead sources. Start, test, and improve. Target your most loyal and engaged clients.

Inbound marketing is long-term and relationship-focused. Spend as much time as you can learning about your target audiences. Hyper-target your most engaged viewers with adverts. You'll establish a self-sustaining, self-driven approach.

3.2 Building a media kit for Nonprofits' webpage

While some charities are very specialized and unique, others may be "competing" for cash with hundreds of others. In either case, your nonprofit must preserve and distribute a media kit. A **media kit** is a collection of data, figures, testimonials, news pieces, and biographies that explain your organization's story (typically to the media). A press

package (media kit) can be printed or downloaded. Without a media kit, many non-profits would struggle to reach their target audiences. It's one of the biggest blunders a nonprofit can make.

Media kits are vital for informing the media about your organization's essential messages. While you can predict which events a reporter will attend, you never know when they will call, wanting to do a story on your group and needing specific details. Reporters no longer cover beats like local nonprofits. As a result, organizations must be ready to perform the reporter's homework and ensure that key messages and accurate facts are analyzed and made public. Insufficient media kit could lose you the article, as well as thousands of readers and potential donors.

A good media kit makes information

easy to find. Keep it simple and clear. It doesn't have to be big. Put the most important information first and avoid presenting extraneous material. Facts are more likely to be used in a work if they are easily accessible. Let journalists know what's in the kits as you hand them out to ensure their stories are complete. Journalists are often pressed for time and require precise information. Simple media kits can save you time and ensure that your nonprofit's vital ideas and facts are heard.

In a media kit, every nonprofit should include the following five documents:

Information Sheets

Fact sheets are short summaries of your organization's mission for critical audiences. Some NGOs have a single fact sheet that summarizes their en-

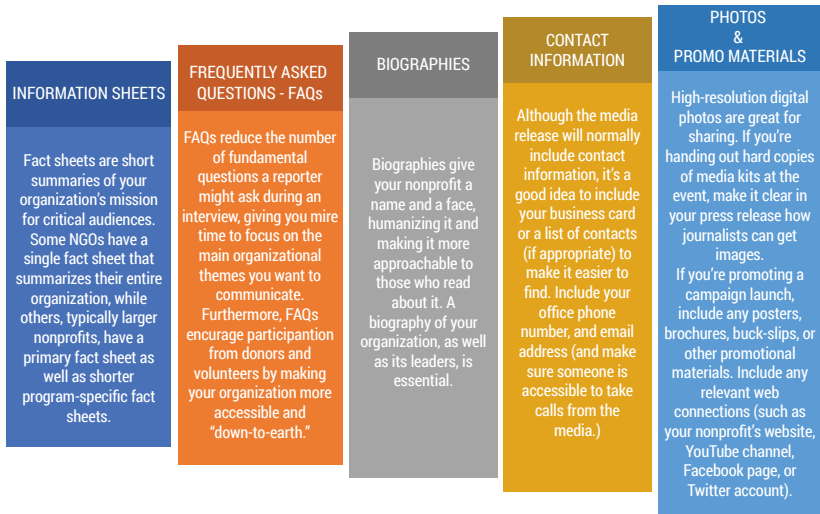


Figure 18: Media kit components

tire organization, while others, typically larger nonprofits, have a primary fact sheet as well as shorter program-specific fact sheets.

Most Commonly Asked Questions (FAQs)

FAQs reduce the number of fundamental questions a reporter might ask during an interview, giving you more time to focus on the main organizational themes you want to communicate. Furthermore, FAQs encourage participation from donors and volunteers by making your organization more accessible and “down-to-earth.”

Biographies

Biographies give your nonprofit a name and a face, humanizing it and making it more approachable to those who read about it. A biography of your organization, as well as its leaders, is essential.

Information about how to contact the CSO

Although the media release will normally include contact information, it’s a good idea to include your business card or a list of contacts (if appropriate) to make it easier to find. Include your office phone number, mobile phone number, and email address (and make sure someone is accessible to take calls from the media!).

Photos/Promo Materials

High-resolution digital photos are great for sharing. If you’re handing out hard copies of media kits at the event, make it clear in your press release how journalists can get images.

Posters, brochures, buckslips, and other promotional items

If you’re promoting a campaign launch, include any posters, brochures, buckslips, or other promotional materials. Include any relevant web connections (such as your nonprofit’s website, YouTube channel, Facebook page, or Twitter account).



Figure 19: Simple media kit components for a public event

3.3 Creating a press kit for the media partners

Creating a press kit should have two main objectives: promoting your organization's brand or the goals and targets of the campaign you are running and

message, and meeting the demands of industry journalists. Informed and appealing press kits. It should include basic information about your organization and resources like images and biographies. It should help your cause obtain positive media attention.

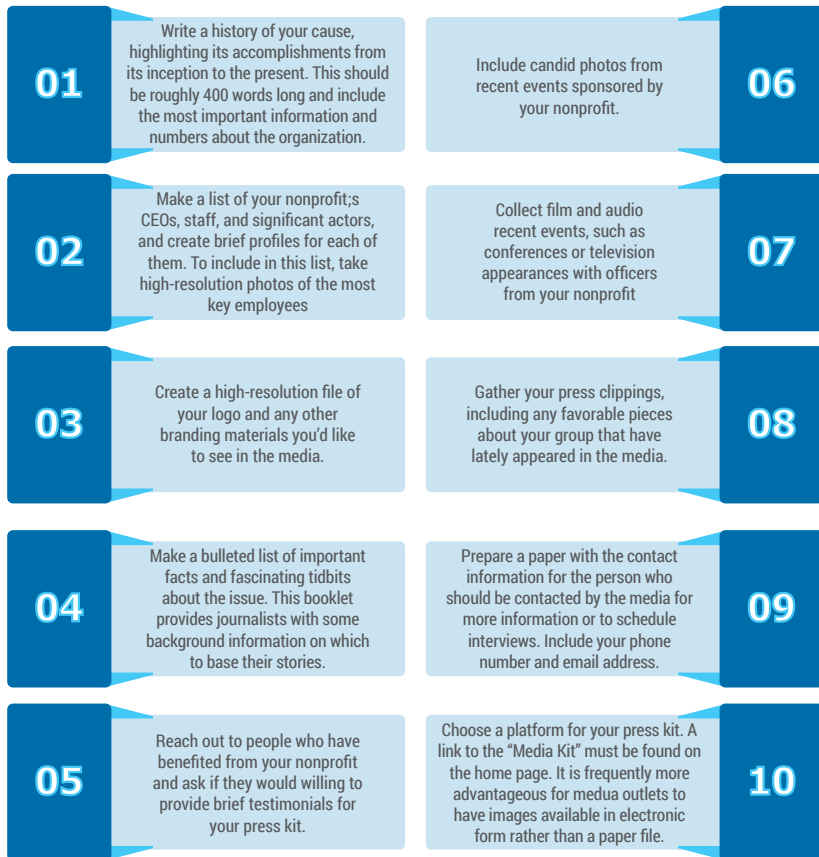
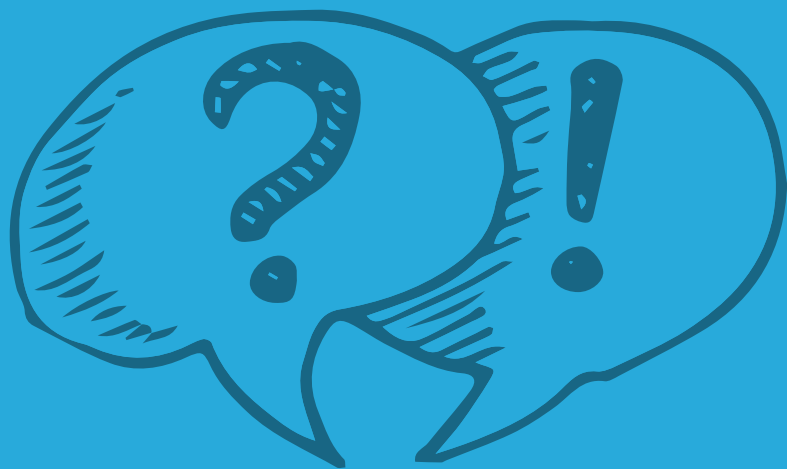


Figure 20: Pres kit for a web page and cooperation with partners



4

SOCIAL MEDIA AND CIVIL SOCIETY

Globally, there are projected to be almost 4 billion social media users in 2022, up 4.8% from 2021². It is expected that these numbers will climb, making social media an even more valuable tool for NGOs and their campaigns. Every year, new technology and trends emerge, and this year is no different. There are a number of social media trends to watch in 2022 if you want to improve how your community engages

with your nonprofit and its initiatives online.

Social media operations work best when strategically incorporated into an organization's outreach, program design and implementation, and monitoring and evaluation activities. Keeping this in mind, the guidebook is meant to help organizations create local capability and mobilization.

² <https://www.oberlo.com/statistics/how-many-people-use-social-media>

4.1 - What is social media?

Social networking has changed our working patterns. In the same way as traditional media, social media allows people to gather and share information. The Internet’s highly interactive global or regional social networks allow this in real time unlike traditional media. Popular social media sites include Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram, and Pinterest. However, new platforms develop frequently, and keeping up with changes is critical to social media success. It’s also vital to share good material. Content should be honest, real, and engaging to build trust and naturally enlarge an audience. Posting purely out of obligation is bad.

Posting intriguing, captivating, and thought-provoking content is key. Remember that the same regulations that

govern conventional media also govern social media. Nothing on social media is truly private. Anything you post online reflects on you or your organization.

4.1.1 - Who uses social media?

People, governments, NGOs, and corporations use social media all throughout the world. In addition to making new acquaintances, it is used by governments, NGOs, and corporations to sell their products. Geographical access can have a huge impact on the platforms people use.

The Chinese government has blocked Facebook, forcing citizens to use alternative social media platforms. Expensive internet services hinder access to social media in underdeveloped countries. Less social media engagement may come from high bandwidth prices if sites are not mobile-friendly.

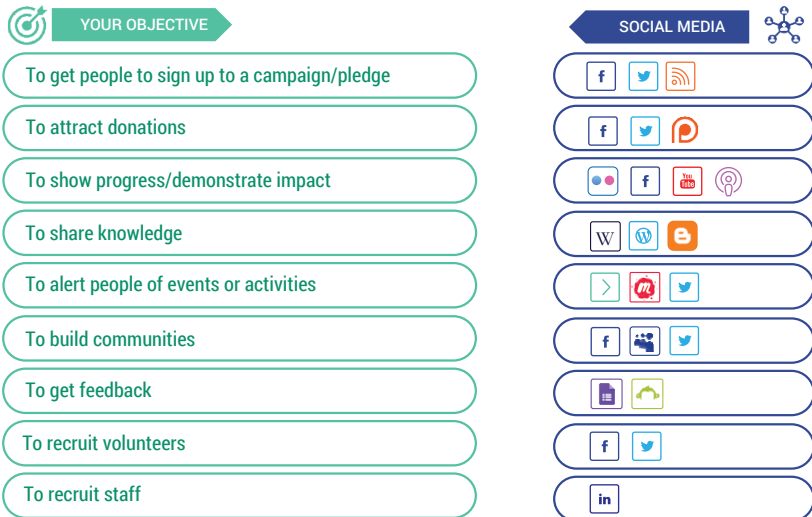


Figure 21: Social media outlets used for specific goals

4.1.2 - What are the different types of social media?

There are many different types of social media platforms, ranging from social networking sites that connect people with comparable interests through an online community to photo and video sharing sites. These platforms are continually changing, and new ones appear on a daily basis. Here's a quick rundown of the many types of social networking networks. There are numerous alternatives available to meet a variety of specific requirements.

SOCIAL NETWORKS - A social networking site is an online community where users may establish profiles and build social networks of friends and followers. Users can communicate with people in the network by posting updates and images and discussing ideas, activities, and events. Facebook is the most popular social networking site in the world, with over one billion active users, but there are many other sites that cater to regional or personal interests. Other prominent social networking sites, also known as microblogging sites, include Twitter and Tumblr.

BLOGS - A blog (short for web log) is an online communication platform where a blogger (the person who gives content to a blog) can regularly upload stories, photographs, videos, or links. Using the human voice of staff, volunteers, or partners, organizations can share valuable field experiences with-

out maintaining their websites. They're also a great spot to share important news with partners and stakeholders. Like other forms of social media, readers may communicate with bloggers by commenting on blog posts. They can also subscribe to a blog to be alerted of new posts. In reverse chronological order, older posts are archived for reference. Blogs make it easy to update information, which encourages posters to do so regularly. The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation's blog, *Impatient Optimists*, features stories and updates from grantees, partners, staff, and leadership. Popular blogging platforms include WordPress, Blogger, Tumblr, Squarespace, and Typepad.

PHOTO AND VIDEO SHARING SITES - With the spread of smartphones, photo and video sharing services have grown in popularity. Users can add user-generated photographs and videos to their profiles on the sites. YouTube is the most popular video sharing platform, and uploading videos requires a user account. YouTube videos, on the other hand, are accessible to anyone. Vimeo is another video-sharing and uploading platform. Flickr, Instagram, and Pinterest are all popular photo sharing services that cater to diverse niches. Users can also upload films to some photo-sharing sites.

WHATSAPP - WhatsApp is a cross-platform messaging and VoIP service owned by Facebook. WhatsApp is the third most popular social network-

ing app. Many charities use this platform to connect with their supporters. WhatsApp also added the WhatsApp Business app, which allows nonprofits to create profiles with up to 500 fundraising campaigns and product and service catalogs. Potential funders and buyers can read these campaigns on a website or forward them to peers via WhatsApp. Businesses may reach a wider audience by sharing campaigns within WhatsApp, which is widely used globally.

4.1.3 Social media focal trends for nonprofits in 2022

Video Stories and Live-streaming

Video materials have been increasingly valuable over time, and this year is projected to be even more so. Now is the moment to start using video to communicate with your community if your organization isn't already. But, because video has been there for a long time, what exactly is on the rise? Storytelling and live-streaming are both used.

On sites like Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter (although on Twitter, they're

called Fleets), Stories are short videos that are available for your community to watch for 24 hours. Nonprofits are employing stories to increase their platform's reach since these videos are usually more noticed than a plain video sitting in the algorithm's feed. If you want your film to continue on your profile after the 24-hour period has passed, you may preserve it as a highlight, which will appear on your organization's page. This enables you to generate relevant material for your community and then archive it for later viewing by users.

Another emerging video trend to keep an eye on is live-streaming. Due to COVID-19, most things have gone virtual, thus many organizations have decided to live-stream unique events to their communities. Live-streaming is more engaging, and most platforms enable you to inform your audience before going live, such as Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, Twitter, and LinkedIn. This is beneficial to organizations because it reduces the number of platforms they must manage, and it is beneficial to viewers since they do not have to leave their chosen social media site.



Figure 22: *How to Broadcast a Facebook Live Event in 7 Easy Steps*

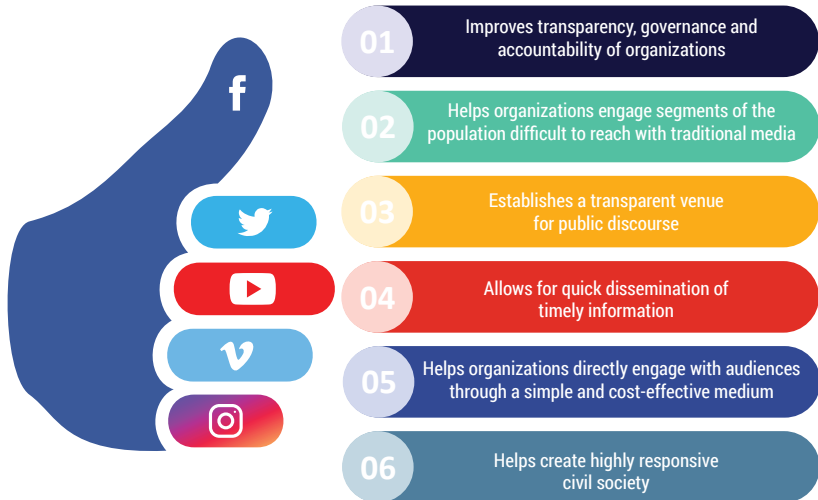


Figure 23: Strong points of different social media platforms

4.2 Social media for capacity building and strengthening - benefits of social media for CSOs

Civil society organizations can use social media to better effectively attain their communication goals and communicate with their audiences. The platforms may appear simple in appearance, yet they have the capacity to link tiny, dispersed enterprises to a worldwide network. Organizations may need to undergo internal cultural adjustments and be prepared to function in a more transparent and linked environment in order to utilize social media as a communication channel. Some of the advantages of social media for civil society are listed below.

While social media platforms appear

simple to use, creating and maintaining an online community takes expertise and creativity. Investment in human and technical resources is also required. If you're contemplating whether or not to use social media in your organization's communication strategy, involve the top. Discuss the benefits of social media participation for your organization and whether you have the resources to sustain the program. Building a social media presence takes time, effort, and patience when trying new technologies. Leadership will need to dedicate time and resources to the process. Creating content for social media should be a team effort led by a dedicated employee. Some companies may overlook the value of hiring a full-time social media manager and instead hire an intern or a temporary employee. Building a successful and con-

sistent social media program requires a permanent position for this role.

The person in charge of this position is called a social media coordinator. He or she must comprehend the organization's objective, acquire information, grasp the dangers and rewards of sharing information online, and use good judgment while publishing. This person should also know the organization's values and culture well enough to properly communicate them via social media. An enthusiasm for social media and technology is required, as is basic knowledge of and expertise with social media platforms. Incorporating content from other departments allows the social media coordinator to create a steady stream of interesting and useful content. A computer and Internet access are essential to run an effective social media operation. Purchasing a digital camera for the group is also required. Words are weak compared to images, and the right image may instantly engage a reader. A few short online photography classes and some

practice will improve shot quality and audience engagement. Once an online community is developed, social media management solutions can be used to help manage accounts and evaluate impact.

- Developing a Social Media Policy

An organization should create a basic social media policy before starting out. The policy's purpose is to set criteria for social media sharing and ethical behavior. There are no set guidelines for how detailed or comprehensive a social media policy should be because every organization has distinct aims and audiences. Instead, prepare ahead of time for any challenges and scenarios that may arise while starting social media activities, and then build procedures for dealing with them. The questions below will help you establish a social media policy for your organization and decide what guidelines to include.

Consider the following questions prior to writing the policy:

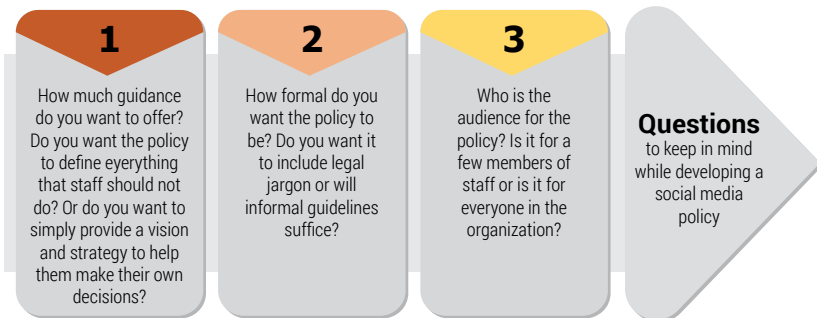


Figure 24: Questions to keep in mind while developing a social media policy

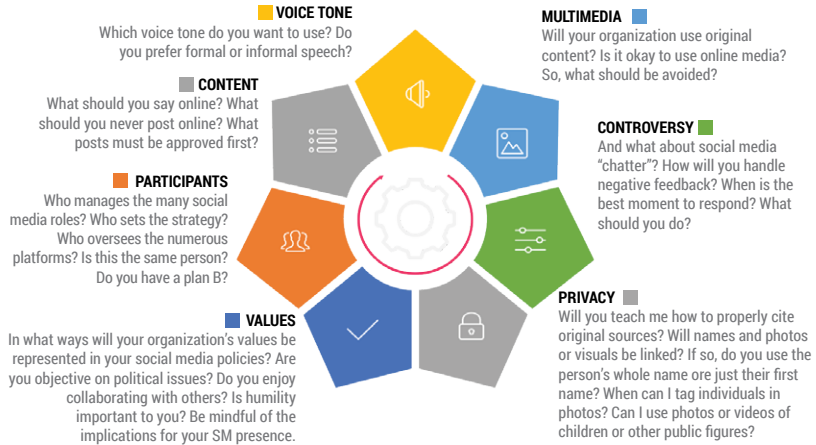


Figure 25: Guidance on writing a social media policy

Include guidance on the following when writing the policy:

Once a social media policy has been drafted, circulate the policy among key members of the organization for input. The final policy should be approved by leadership to ensure there is no ambiguity in expectations.

- Linking social media to programmatic goals

Incorporate social media into service delivery after establishing a social media policy and plan. Increase awareness of your services in the online community.

An organization can use social media to reach a new demographic and promote its services. It's easier than ever to reach your target audience directly and regularly using social media mar-

keting. While promoting their programs and services, organizations can also answer inquiries, create open dialogue, and collect feedback from their online community.

Link online activism with offline activism to enhance impact of advocacy efforts

If an organization has a strong grassroots advocacy movement on the ground, the advocacy efforts can be linked to the organization's social media channels to increase the influence of the movement. This will allow the group to reach an untapped audience right away, as well as increase its lobbying efforts by encouraging people to share interesting information with their own online communities.

- Leverage social media for fundraising

Online fundraising and social media

can help organizations reach a large audience quickly and affordably. Using the internet to raise funds can be a stand-alone fundraiser or an add-on to a traditional fundraising event. Online fundraising uses basic social media concepts. Posts must be readable. They must be visually appealing, educational, and explain how donations will assist. An urgent appeal can be more effective. Uninterested in text-only appeals may be drawn in by photographs of the needy or infographics showing it. Share these images with your followers, along with a link to your organization's online fundraising platform.

A custom tab on a Facebook Page can also direct fans to these sites. The power of social networks and crowdfunding platforms to help create and market compelling contribution appeals are helping some groups raise donations. While the concept of crowdsourcing is gaining acceptance globally, there are technical limitations. Look at popular tools in your area. Once you've restricted your options, examine whether they'll help you reach your fundraising goals, and if so, what the related costs are. Whether or whether a fundraising platform is used, a clear fundraising goal should be set, prizes selected, and supporters kept informed before and after the campaign. Above all, thank them for their donations or sharing posts to encourage others to donate.

- Empower organizations and constituents to use social media

Once an organization recognizes the usefulness of social media in attaining strategic goals, it can encourage other civil society organizations to use it to achieve their own advocacy goals. Virtual workshops using Google+ Hangouts or live lectures at a central location are both options. The organization can share successful technology, best practices, and resources. Another option is to use YouTube tutorials that teach how to use various social media platforms to help express the message and guide the audience. Businesses can use these casual get-togethers to develop their online community by capturing captive audiences on social media.

Social media should be used in conjunction with other communication channels to reach specific target audiences and achieve programmatic goals. It should never be used instead. The goal is to build an inclusive and comprehensive communication strategy that addresses the digital divide. Entry into social media is difficult. Those who lack Internet literacy may struggle to participate in an organization's operations. Traditional communication, such as fliers, radio, and television, must continue to be used to reach such people. This mix of traditional and social media will help your organization's message get out. A social media campaign can help you reach out to traditional media while also reaching out to others who aren't on the platform. If done appropriately, your organization can generate "buzz" about a project across all media.

- How to use social media in programming your work?

Develop a Strategy

Develop a defined plan in the context of your organization's programmatic goals before beginning a social media presence. Begin by responding to the two following questions:

What role does social media play in your organization? What do you want to achieve with social media for your organization?

Consider your organization's mission, basic values, and programmatic goals when answering these questions. What is the purpose of the organization? What is critical to the organization's success? What is it hoping to achieve?

Consider the organization's objectives as you go through this procedure. Now that you've identified why your organization is on social media and what it wants to achieve, consider the following question:

How will social media help your organization reach its goal?

Consider first who your organization's target demographic is. Who is this audience? Which social media sites cater to this audience? Define the target audience first, then hunt for social media channels that fit. The idea is to invest in a platform that can reach the intended demographic. For example, if your target market is young mothers, you should use Facebook, YouTube, or another popular site in your area. LinkedIn, a professional networking site, is useless for job hunting. Spending time on a platform that does not appeal to the target demographic is a waste of time.

Once the right social media sites are chosen, determine success indicators. The KPIs must be specific, measurable, and linked to the organization's goal. If the performance indicators show the organization is on track to achieve its goal, you know you're on the correct track. If they show the opposite, the organization must rethink its approach and remeasure.



Figure 26: Steps to developing an effective social media plan

Define Your Audience

Consider who your organization's target audience is before answering this question. What are the demographics of this target market? Which social media sites are appropriate for this audience? First, define your target audience, then research which social media channels are appropriate for them. The goal is to devote resources to a platform that has the ability to reach the intended audience. If your target audience is young mothers, for example, you should probably reach out to them on Facebook or YouTube, or any other platform that is popular with that demographic in your area. Using LinkedIn, a professional network where professionals can connect for job prospects, will be ineffective.

Spending time on a platform that does not cater to the target demographic is a waste of important resources. Identify performance indicators to measure achievement once the relevant social media platforms have been chosen. Specific and measurable performance indicators must be related directly to the organization's goal. If the performance indicators show that the organization is successfully achieving or progressing toward its goal, you are on the right track. If they show the opposite, the organization must change its plan, implement a new strategy, and measure again.

Refine the Language

Choosing an acceptable language to communicate with your target audience is vital when developing a social media strategy. How literate is the intended audience? What is their first language? Will you need to speak more than one language? These are just a few of the questions to ask while developing an effective social media strategy. Whether the audience is extremely literate or not, using plain English is usually the best option. Plain language is like everyday speech. It's simple, devoid of jargon, and helps readers find and understand content faster. If English is not the local language, the person implementing an organization's social media strategy must also be fluent in the local language. Despite focusing on a local audience, an organization can reach a global audience. While global engagement may not be part of the organization's social media strategy, it is vital.

Prepare Your Content

Engaging content is vital for audience engagement. Fortunately, an organization does not have to develop new content for every social media post. Existing resources can be utilized for social media. Social media content can be created by repurposing program literature, studies, photos, and other materials. Keep in mind that each social networking site has its own niche and format. Create content for each platform. If no existing material exists, organization might produce content expressly for their social media audience.

Brand and Positioning

An organization's brand must be consistent across all social media platforms. You can easily get carried away with images and typography, but deviating from your organization's brand may cause your work to lose its audience. If your organization hasn't yet invested in a brand identity system, try to maintain a uniform look and feel across all social media platforms. Use the organization's logo and color style when developing other items. An organization's positioning statement should be consistent across all mediums. What is the organization's mission? How would you explain your organization's mission to a stranger? This statement should be repeated in the about part of a website, the profile page on Facebook, or the concluding slide of a film. The more an organization's brand image is consistent and coherent, the easier it is for people to recognize it. More awareness means more opportunity to make a difference.

4.3 Social media for nonprofits: How to make an impact with little budget

Lack of cash, time, or resources, as well as limited organic reach from various social media sites may all contribute to decreased success. Most social networking sites are pay-to-play. It's impossible to reach your target audience if you don't advertise. But how can you stay motivated if your nonprofit's social media strategy isn't working? Is it pos-

sible to completely rely on social media to collect finances, support, and volunteer? Yes, that's easy.

What are the advantages of social media for non-profits? First, let's discuss why you're marketing your organization. According to HubSpot, nonprofit social media marketers prioritize fundraising, brand recognition, volunteer recruitment, and news dissemination. Why? Because each goal requires another person's participation. By 2020, nearly 3.6 billion individuals will be using social media, making it easy to find supporters on platforms like Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram. Or, in other words: Using social media properly can help promote your cause and recruit volunteers.

Because you're posting short-form content on social media, your audience doesn't have to do anything to get involved. If your audience is donating money but not receiving anything in return, make it as simple as possible for them to participate. We all like convenience and ease.

What you'll need to start promoting your non-profit organization on social media before we go into the details of a social media plan, let's examine the basics. Like any new marketing approach, you'll need to know what you're working towards. This includes:

- **Setting clear goals: Do you care more about getting money, raising aware-**

- ness, or finding volunteers?
- **Your target demographic:** You need to know their preferred content and channels, as well as the marketing personas you're targeting.
- Then choose your social media channels: Do you have a lot? Focus first on the platform most of your target audience utilizes, then extend as results show.
- How to implement it: Do you know your time commitment? Create a weekly (or monthly) posting schedule that works for you.

sive audience. There's no reason why this type of content couldn't improve engagement and help your nonprofit achieve its goals faster.

- Run Twitter polls;
- Host an Instagram Stories Q&A session;
- Post a Facebook survey;
- Ask your audience to share their tale through a regular status post.

The information gained will be important in the future when it comes to developing better-targeted content.

Seven ways nonprofits can make an impact on social media with little budget

2. Include hashtags to increase your reach



Figure 27: Seven steps to make an impact on social media with little budget

Almost all of NGOs have only one person in charge of their social media presence. If this, is you and you're looking for a means to boost the results you're getting from organic posting, use these tips to make a huge effect with the limited time and resources you have:

1. Create interactive content to encourage participation

Interactive content is any type of media that requires more than just a pas-

Remember how we mentioned most social media networks are transitioning to a pay-to-play model?

Include hashtags in your content. Using a hashtag to brand your nonprofit's social media content can help you gain greater organic reach in native search. With millions of daily visitors on sites like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest, and LinkedIn, why wouldn't you want to put your brand in front of them? If you're in a position to:

Create your own hashtag and build a strong following by getting involved OR jump onto a popular hashtag and make it your own...especially if you use hashtags on Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram. But, as a brand, you must build a strong hashtag before your audience uses it.

3. Use pictures to increase visitors to your website.

Did you know that Tweets featuring photographs and videos are three times more likely to be retweeted? Facebook postings with graphics as well as videos also get 2.3 times more likes:

may call you to ask how they can assist, but you may not understand that time is as important as substance. Followers anticipate a response within six hours on Facebook and an hour on Twitter. That means you'll need to respond fast (and often check your notifications) if you want to impress them before they lose interest. Responding to private messages promptly is the only way to improve your Facebook response rate. Check in everyday and react to messages as soon as feasible.

As a social media marketing business, you must preserve the reputation of your

- No Difference**
Only for 11.1% of users it doesn't make any difference whether the post is a video or an image
- Images**
For 29.6% of the users the image is more attractive and powerful for them to get engaged
- Videos**
Only for 59.3% of users the video is more attractive and powerful for them to get engaged

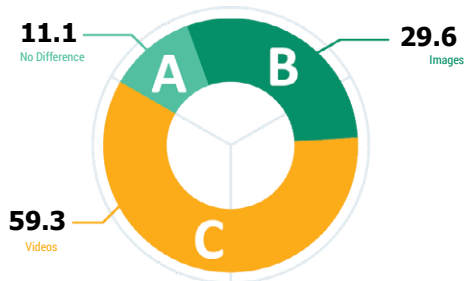


Figure 28: Percentage of content shared on social media and audience republication

Large, high-quality photos stand out in a crowded News Feed. That's great for NGOs trying to raise brand awareness and traffic to their websites. So, keep this in mind while you create items to upload.

nonprofit clients in order to keep them as followers. You don't want to lose potential donors at the first hurdle. It's useless to advertise your charity on social media if you can't communicate with people.

4. Check in daily and respond to questions

If you follow these tips, you should receive more private messages. People

5. Make it easy for followers to donate

Most donors who find you on social media will need to go to your website. Here's where the "Donation" button

comes up. Donate is a good call-to-action for non-profits. It will be easy for someone who visits your profile to make a gift (without having to rummage through your recent content for a link). To do so for your organization's Facebook page, simply follow these steps:

1. Visit your Page and click "Add a Button". (This is found just beneath your cover photo, as shown in the image above.)
2. Select the 'Donate' option.
3. Fill-in the details you'll need to send a visitor to your donation page.
4. Test the button to make sure it's working.

You can apply this same concept to other social media profiles, too. Although social media networks such as Twitter and Instagram lack a dedicated call-to-action button, there's no reason you couldn't link to the contribution page from your bio. Giving your audience a clear, quick, and simple way to get involved with your cause could be just the push they need to make a donation—and help you accomplish the social media campaign goals you've established for your nonprofit.

6. Schedule social media content in advance

You might utilize a social content scheduling tool to publish content automatically and ahead of time. As a result, you may spend a few hours each week instead of two hours every day or waiting until the last minute. Many systems, like Facebook, provide for scheduling tools

and IFTT (if this then that) capabilities.

7. Measure the effectiveness of your strategy

Over half of nonprofit communicators struggle to evaluate their work. This causes a huge issue: you have no notion if you're on pace to meet your goals. That's why evaluating the techniques outlined here should be a key priority for all social media marketers. What works for one organization may not work for another. You may use data from native platforms like:

- [Facebook Insights](#)
- [Instagram Insights](#)
- [Twitter Analytics](#)
- [Pinterest Analytics](#)

...and combine these native insights, providing additional information on how your scheduled content is performing. Then, you've got the possibility to dive deeper with your Google Analytics report, and discover the common behavior flow of people clicking each type of link.

4.4 Social media and its role in the development of campaigns

The usage of social media to encourage development improvements and social campaigning is a viable option. It enables groups with little resources to expand their audience reach, engage with people, and inform them about vital issues affecting their lives and commu-

nities by utilizing modern technologies. This can include anything from global health to gender equality to eradicating extreme poverty to environmental issues and any other issue at the core of a campaigner's objectives. However, turning online efforts into real-world outcomes isn't always straightforward. Prior to picking a tool, organizations must decide whether the tool is acceptable for reaching the target audience and achieving the desired outcome. We will see this topic on the case study of the Save the Blue Heart of Europe Campaign implemented by EcoAlbania and its partners.

Social media presence

A two-way conversation between an organization and its followers is required to have a presence on social media platforms. It's not just about broadcasting information in a one-way stream; it's about interacting with the public and having real-time conversations with them. Establishing your organization's social media philosophy and defining goals will aid in the development of your posting strategy. It will also enable you to persuade key stakeholders of the importance of social media.

The following is an example of what your organization's philosophy could look like:

- **To protect and enhance the organization's reputation as XYZ organization;**
- **to deliver the information constituents demand; and**
- **to be a trusted resource and ally for**

the XYZ community

You could set goals like this to help you implement your philosophy:

- **Increasing the value of the XYZ brand's social media channels by sharing and reporting on the latest news in the field;**
- **Differentiating the XYZ organization from others by emphasizing what we do differently than other organizations doing similar work;**
- **Turning followers into advocates – getting others to share our messaging, turning followers into donors, and donors into evangelists – putting a tangible human touch on the work our organization is doing;**
- **fostering collaborations with like-minded and influential brands and bloggers promoting action, donations and fundraising efforts;**
- **Getting people to read and share website content, sign a policy petition, or buy a specific product are all examples of enabling mobilization.**

Steps to a Successful Campaign Through Social Media

1. Know what the campaign's goal is.

Once the philosophy of your organization has been set and the goals of the envisaged campaign have been noted down, the first step is to work out the details of the campaign with your team. Are you promoting a special occasion? Is there a new social action in the works? Perhaps you're collaborating with another non-profit on a specific campaign. Understand the end goal

of whatever campaign you're running. When a user or follower sees your post, what action do you want them to take in and process? Is the goal stated clearly while remaining entertaining, lovable, and shareable? How will you assess the campaign's effectiveness?

Nail down these important details first to get a clear idea of where you're going.

2. Think about the content you are posting

It's crucial to share the right kind of content on your social media channels. A social impression may be the first interaction your audience has with your organization and your action, for a large portion of your audience. Their interaction must be interesting, engaging, and useful while remaining true to your brand philosophy.

The content should be varied to keep followers interested and returning frequently, as well as to meet any obligations you may have to partners, specific campaigns, donors or events. The following are some examples of content ideas:

- *Original content*

This should be your primary source of information. This could be anything from profiles of leaders in your organization/field to blog posts from someone in the organization commenting on a major development in the campaign, a donor/fundraiser of the week, or even a beautiful photo and quote for a spe-

cial day in your organization's calendar.

Consider this content to be what distinguishes your organization from others in your field. These messages should make people feel personally connected to your organization and cause, highlight some of the key players behind the scenes, and/or encourage people to return to your website to learn more, donate, partake in your activities and call them to action.

- **Content that is Relevant to the campaign**

Sharing content that is relevant to your mission and action, whether it was created by your organization or not, strengthens your position as a thought leader in the field. Content that will pique your audience's interest News articles, statistics, infographics, and special event opportunities are all examples of this.

- **Promotions for campaigns, events, and partners**

Use your social media channels to raise awareness for special campaigns your organization is running in the framework of a campaign: an upcoming event, or a collaboration with another company, a site visit or the start of a collaboration with analogue actors.

Instead of rehashing an invite or providing information that's already on your website, give your social media followers something unique. Are you planning an event with a well-known speaker? To get

people excited, share a great quote he or she recently said. Are you attempting to increase the number of fundraisers for a specific campaign? Give your followers some great ideas that have worked for others, as well as photos.

People want to know what they'll get out of it, and it's up to you to show them.

3. Determine the campaign's promotion on social media channels.

It's now time to figure out what kind of content you'll need for each social media platform. For Facebook and Instagram, you might want to make a short video. A unique banner image is required for a Facebook event. You might also need to make images for social media sites like Twitter and Pinterest. To make this step work, you must first understand the purpose of each channel.

If you want people to see and interact with your posts, you'll need to invest in social media advertising. Start with one social media channel and experiment to see what works best for your audience and content if you haven't used the advertising tools native to each one yet. There are numerous social media outlets and each one of them has its strengths in promoting your campaign and contributing to its success.

4. Using popular social media outlets

As previously stated, there are numerous social media networks, and chances are you've utilized at least one. Using social

media to enhance an organization's goal and achieve success in a specific campaign. Before adding social media into your organization's communication plan, understand about the various platforms. Examine how other organizations use social media to promote their work and engage with their audiences. Pay attention to the stories and dialogues. Which stories are most popular? How many platforms do the organizations use? How frequently do they update? What seems to work and what doesn't?

These observations can help you make a more informed decision once your organization has established a social media strategy. A plan that supports the organization's programmatic goals and the goals of the different campaigns and actions it is implementing, is more vital than being spontaneous or imaginative. Also, remember that little steps are fine. While some organizations manage five unique social media identities, your organization does not have to. Your organization can start with one platform and then increase your social media presence as your team becomes more familiar with the tools and process.

Facebook is the most popular social networking site. It allows users to interact with people and brands in a playful manner. Public persons and entities can create public Users can like or comment on posts in both modes, exchange photos and videos, plan and promote events, and post news or information. Every time someone does this, it appears in

their friends' and followers' news feeds. Organizations can use Facebook's open and dynamic interface to promote their cause and build a fan base. They can customize their Page with high-quality images and apps to drive traffic to their blogs, websites, and other online networks. Organizations can create Groups in addition to Pages to foster

ence and track which times and types of content receive the most engagement. Then, based on your findings, increase your efforts.

Consider investing in Facebook advertising. This allows organizations to target specific demographics in order to increase reach. Depending on your goals,



Figure 29: Using Facebook as a tool for action

debate and control privacy settings. **Increase your Facebook posting frequency** to reach more people throughout the day. It's best to post 2-3 times a day, with a variety of content. Experiment with the best times for your audi-

you can promote a specific post to reach your current followers, reach out to followers' friends, or even promote a specific link. Even a modest budget of \$5 per day, or a few hundred dollars a month, will allow you to experiment with what's

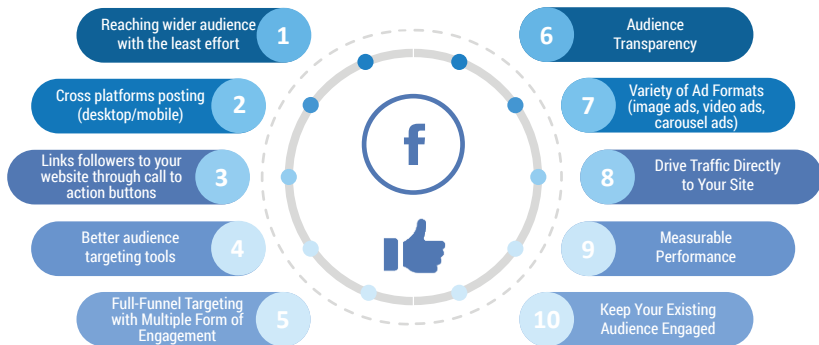


Figure 30: Strong points of using Facebook as a visual medium for a campaign

right for your audience.

Twitter is a microblogging and social networking site with a simple interface for sharing and discovering information. Users can establish a profile, follow others, and get followers. Tweets are Twitter posts that are limited to 280 characters. Users can contribute text, links, photos, or hashtags (#) to categorize material within the 280-character restriction. A tweet can also be favorit-

mation (or an influencer who mentions your organization), direct tweet responses, and tweets about any specific campaigns or upcoming events (40 percent of daily tweets)

Consistently tweet because Twitter displays users' feeds in real time, your message can quickly be pushed to the bottom of people's feeds. When it comes to Twitter, more is often better, so start with 3-5 tweets per day (avoid

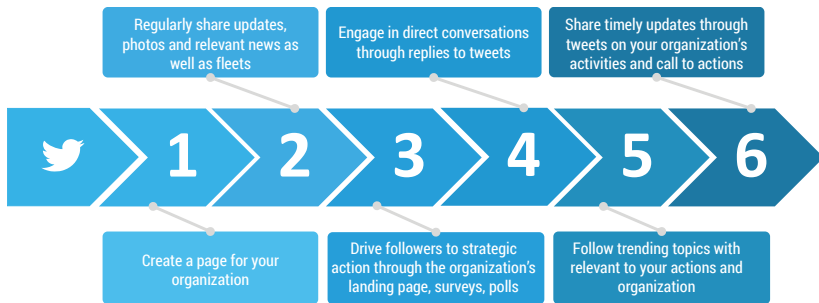


Figure 31: How to set up and use Twitter

ed, retweeted, or replied to. Millions of people follow popular users.

Plan a variety of tweets to be sent out at different times. This will ensure that you appear in people's feeds all day. Include:

- 35 percent of daily tweets should be original content written by your organization or content featuring someone from your organization.
- Content that isn't directly related to your organization but is related to your mission or space (aim for 25% of daily tweets).
- Retweets from other Twitter users who post interesting, relevant infor-

posting multiple tweets in a row—this can be off-putting). Use [Twitter's analytics tool](#) to figure out what frequency works best for your audience.

Make use of hashtags. They're a quick and easy way for new followers to find your content. Find out which hashtags are popular in your field and start using them. Creating campaign or event-specific hashtags is another great way to distinguish your brand and see who's talking about your organization and its campaign on Twitter.

Live-tweet events or campaign related

conferences hosted by your organization. Another way for followers to find your feed while also establishing your company as a thought leader is to use this method. Have someone live tweet-ing and offering perspective at these events, if possible.

Make a Twitter List These can be very effective ways to organize and assign users to specific lists within your organization. You'll never miss a tweet from an influencer in your field if you use lists, making it easy to engage with them and follow the conversation.

It's sometimes more important to show than to tell an audience how a software works. **YouTube** is the internet's most popular video-sharing platform. It allows users to search for videos made by amateurs and professionals alike. Organizations can curate their own videos and subscribe to and follow other channels by creating channels. Videos may be easily uploaded and edited using the system's video editing features. Using suitable titles and keyword tags makes searching for videos much easi-

er. Once posted to YouTube, videos can be embedded into other websites or blogs, making sharing even easier.

Join the YouTube's Nonprofits program. This will give your organization access to features like annotations that link to your website, exposure on YouTube's nonprofit page, and a branded channel – features that aren't available to non-partners.

Annotations can be used to add Calls to Action. After users have watched your video, encourage them to take action by visiting your website, sharing it with friends, or watching another video from your organization. Annotations will assist you in mobilizing an already engaged audience. To increase link-backs, make sure to include a link back to your site in the video description.

Optimize your videos for search engine optimization. Tag your video with relevant keywords related to your organization and the content to make it as "discoverable" as possible. To get the most search traffic, write a detailed



Figure 32: Simple steps of opening a YouTube channel for your organization

video description that includes relevant keywords and links back to your website.

LinkedIn is a professional-oriented social networking platform. Individuals can establish a profile page that includes information about their professional, educational, and volunteer experiences. Businesses and organizations can build an Organization Page and, as a subset of the Organization Page, a Showcase Page to highlight a specific initiative they want to promote. LinkedIn allows users to post and search for job openings, review and recommend colleagues, and share and interact with others for professional purposes.

Pinterest is a photo-sharing network that works like a pinboard, allowing users to upload and pin images and videos to boards. Organizations can establish topical boards for their programs and services, and pin flyers, infographics, pictures, and images directly from the Internet. Users can get followers and follow persons or boards that they are interested in. Instagram and Flickr both allow users to create albums and

edit the appearance of their photos. Each of these platforms allows organizations to be quite creative by releasing a sequence of images from events or publishing more abstract, yet engaging photography.

Instagram is a free, online photo-sharing application and social network platform that was acquired by Facebook in 2012. Instagram allows users to edit and upload photos and short videos through a mobile app. Users can add a caption to each of their posts and use hashtags and location-based geotags to index these posts and make them searchable by other users within the app. Each post by a user appears on their followers' Instagram feeds and can also be viewed by the public when tagged using hashtags or geotags.

Stay Focused! This is one platform where you can truly promote your own brand and your campaign without having to mix in content from other sources. Take advantage of this opportunity to shine! Send an amazing photo of a program your organization is working



Figure 33: *Instagram as a means of disseminating the message*

on. Give your followers a behind-the-scenes look at your organization's work towards a specific campaign. Share a "photo quote" that motivates your team and followers to feel passionate about what you're doing.

Make use of hashtags. It's a great way to start small campaigns and encourage your followers to use a specific hashtag to spread the word. It can also aid in the discovery of new followers.

Post on a regular basis. Maintaining a fresh Instagram feed requires posting at least twice a week. However, more is always better!

5. Make visual content relevant to your campaign and the channel you are using.

It's now time to put all of the elements you planned out in the previous steps, and the specific social media outlet, into action. You don't need to be a graphic designer to create images that are both entertaining and engaging. There are numerous free online resources for you to create engaging content, be that static or video content. Canva is a favorite amongst a lot of organizations for quickly creating text-based images. Design Wizard is another useful tool. It's a new graphic design program that allows you to quickly create a personalized image. It has a library of over 1 million high-quality images and thousands of templates. Design Wizard is

also compatible with HubSpot, Marketo, Buffer, and Intercom. For video production, Davinci Resolve has a free version for most users, while Adobe Rush allows limited applicability of its editing capabilities for video editing on the go (on mobile)

6. Make a schedule for your posts.

It's now time to make a schedule! You've devised a strategy. You have a calendar. You have fantastic content! You're ready to combine everything in your preferred social media scheduling tool. Hootsuite or your HubSpot social media scheduler will suffice. Another option is to use a buffer. Alternatively, you could use any useful [social media management tools](#), such as Flipboard, Tweetdeck and others.

7. Keep an eye on things and react accordingly.

Once you have shared a post about the activities of your campaign, don't just put it on the shelf and forget about it! You must be involved in this well-oiled social media machine, even if it is running smoothly in the background. Being present on your profiles is an important part of managing social media and engaging your followers in your action. You can set up alerts on your phone using the management tools we discussed earlier. You'll be able to respond quickly if someone comments on your Facebook post or replies on Twitter, Instagram and YouTube.

8. Analyze and make necessary adjustments.

Take some time to analyze your data to see what worked and what didn't. Perhaps all of your early morning posts were a hit, while your mid-afternoon posts were a flop. Alternatively, one type of visual content or messaging received more engagement than the other. Then apply what you've learned to your next campaign's tactics.

Although not every social media campaign will include all of these steps, they serve as a good starting point. Your social media strategy should be tightly linked to your inbound marketing strategy. That is to say, don't lose sight of your end goals of increasing visits, leads, and customers.

Writing Tips & Tools for Social Media

The social media channels of your organization provide an opportunity to promote your activities and communicate with followers in a more casual, friendly manner while still maintaining

a professional, reputable image. There are several writing best practices that can be used to convey this:

- Use first-person writing across all channels, and don't start tweets with hashtags or handles unless you're responding to someone directly. Use a period before the person's Twitter handle if you want this tweet to be seen by your entire network rather than just that person.
- Use abbreviations as little as possible. Use common abbreviations when necessary.
- Keep your Facebook posts to a maximum of 3-5 sentences per post.
- If you're using Twitter, aim for messages of 100-120 characters to allow other users to respond with their own commentary. If you're including a call to action, make it clear and easy to understand.
- Embedding your logo in original image assets like infographics or quotes will help you stand out. As people share, retweet, and repost your content, it will still be clear where it came from, which will encourage new followers to join in.

An aerial photograph of the Vjosa River, showing its characteristic turquoise color. The river flows through a valley with steep, rocky hillsides. A large, light-colored gravel bar is visible in the middle of the river. In the foreground, a suspension bridge crosses the river. The logo 'save the blue heart of europe' is overlaid in the top right corner.

save the
blue
heart
of europe

Figure 34: Vjosa River © Roland Dorozhani

5

SAVE THE BLUE HEART OF EUROPE CAMPAIGN - VJOSA CASE

5.1 Introduction

The Vjosa River in Albania is one of the last wild rivers in Europe. On its way over 270 km, the Vjosa flows naturally uninfluenced, characterized by beautiful canyons, rapids, islands and curves that create magnificent meanders. What makes this river truly special, internationally, is the fact that almost all its branches flow uninterrupted and intact, creating a vibrant river network like something that no longer currently encountered in Europe.

The Vjosa Valley occupies a total area of 6,700 km² from Greece in

Albania. Due to the importance of this river and its estuaries for the communities living in its area, the economic backdrop, the touristic perspectives for the region, as well as the significance of the safeguard of the biodiversity of the endemic species in the region, a number of local, regional and international organizations, key among them being EcoAlbania, started a campaign for the conservation and promotion of the values of this river basin aptly named "Save the Blue Heart of Europe" (SBHE).



Figure 35: *The middle section of the Vjosa River* © Gernot Kunz

The campaign, implemented by EcoAlbania and its partners is a perfect encapsulation of all the above guidelines with regards to the encroachment of civil society activism and media coverage, demonstrating a perfect balance between first hand activism in contacting the relevant constituents and stakeholders and an integrated dissemination strategy and contact with media stakeholders in order to have the message shared on a large scale, locally, at a national level, as well as in the international arena.

The campaign has achieved a number of milestones throughout the years, e.g. in January of 2014, following dedicated work by the implementation team, the campaign received its first spotlight on international media,³ in May of 2015, a political component was added to the campaign with the activist urging and succeeding in pushing the EU Parliamentarians to demand special protection for

the Vjosa and the halt to all dam plans;⁴ a year later, successful International protest were organized on the banks of the Vjosa to show local resistance to a large dam project;⁵ in May of 2017, the Administrative Court of Tirana, after a legal battle, stopped the dam projects over the Vjosa River;⁶ and in September 2020, the Ministry of Environment, following years of public pushback, rejected the environmental impact assessment of the Turkish-Albanian investor consortium, stating that the proposed Kalivaç Dam will not be built.⁷ Only lately the Government declared the Vjosa river a natural park,⁸ stopping short of declaring it a National Park, which as a designation affords it the highest level of protection, a partial but

4 <https://balkanrivers.net/en/news/european-parliament-criticizes-albanias-hydropower-policies>

5 <https://balkanrivers.net/en/news/international-protest-against-the-destruction-of-europes-last-wild-river>

6 <https://balkanrivers.net/en/news/albanian-court-stops-dam-project-on-the-vjosa>

7 <https://balkanrivers.net/en/news/breaking-news-albanian-pm-rama-reacts-kalivac-will-not-be-built>

8 <https://euronews.al/programs/shqipëri/sot/2022/02/02/kumbaro-sqaron-pse-vjosa-nuk-ushpall-park-kombetar/>



Figure 36: Press Conference in Vjosa Valley, Qesarat in 2014, © Adrian Guri

substantial victory for the campaign. Despite the numerous milestones, the campaign is still ongoing, with the final objective remaining the same, designating the Vjosa as a protected National Park.

5.2 Legacy media and the general public

A concise and well-integrated media strategy is the golden goose and the cornerstone of the success of a campaign. Throughout its strategy, EcoAlbania, for the purposes of the SBHE campaign, has defined a clear campaign goal that summarizes the ultimate envisaged outcome for the campaign, the change they want to see, and the impact they want to make. The goal is easy to communicate and easily understood by most people who face it: Save the Vjosa River by changing its status into a National Park.

The campaign initiated by EcoAlbania has its roots in the long-standing exper-

tise and experience of the organization in protecting the biodiversity and promotion of environmental values in Albania, with the first efforts in exposing the ongoing problem starting almost decade ago, with a grassroots movement in the first years, gaging the situation and evaluating the key problems to be tackled by the campaign, later blooming into full-fledged movement with local and international support at the highest level.⁹

Key to the successful campaign has been the continuous and steadfast exposure of the goals of the campaign and ongoing efforts through traditional media, be that through the numerous¹⁰ appearances¹¹ in local¹² and national¹³ televisions, as well as through the use of radio stations and online resources.

9 <https://www.iucn.org/regions/eastern-europe-and-central-asia/projects/vjosaaoos-river-wild-and-free>

10 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zCwzc6kSlsg>

11 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1T8s3An1Zgs>

12 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=09jlsiv8G7k>

13 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N3X0M2yVW8k>

Media Coverage of the “Save the Blue Heart of Europe” Campaign

Number of publications on different media outlets of the effort of the campaign effort for the period of 2015-2021, at the domestic and international level
 Source: EcoAlbania • Created with Datawrapper

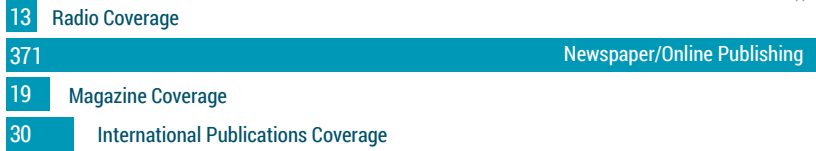


Figure 37: Media coverage of the SBHE campaign, years 2015-2021

An examination of the statistics of the media coverage of the campaign has shown that there is wide interest in the effort by part not only of the population directly affected by the destruction of the habitat of the Vjosa river and its tributaries, and the civil society directly involved in the efforts, but also by national newspapers, television channels and international outlets. Numerous publications were dedicated to in depth investigations on the dealings of the government to push onward with the contested investments that threaten the river, especially by local and regional investigative outlets such as Reporter and Balkan Insight, as well as television coverage by national news in primetime slots, dedicating 3 or more minutes out of the entire news slot (usually 29) to the efforts of the campaign and the update of the public. Further to the national coverage, a stark element that stands out is the coverage of the situation and developments of the campaign, throughout the years, is the international coverage by renown outlets such as Deutsche Welle,¹⁴ Reporterre.net,¹⁵ National Geo-

graphic,¹⁶ and other well-established traditional outlets.

5.3 Online media as a powerful tool for communication

The use of web-based mechanism, such as dedicated platforms and social media has become vital for a successful campaign, with the Save the Blue Heart of Europe campaign achieving full exposure in all possible online media outlets, for the dissemination of the purpose of the action. The central aim of the campaign, as clearly stated on the homepage of the organization's website¹⁷ provides that *“The aim [of the campaign] is for Vjosa to be declared a Wild River National Park in Europe, protecting the entire ecosystem including the watershed, tributaries and active bed, and the wildlife that Vjosa harbors. Only this definition would permanently prevent hydropower projects and other developments within the protected area, and would make a significant contribution to the EU Green Agreement and the Biodiversity Strategy.”*

14 <http://www.dw.com/sq/ruani-zemr%C3%ABn-blut%C3%AB-europ%C3%ABs/a-18429737>

15 <https://reporterre.net/Dans-les-Balkans-un-tsunami-de-barrages-deferle-sur-les-ecosystemes>

16 <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/environment/article/will-dams-spoil-one-of-europe-last-wild-rivers>

17 <https://www.ecoalbania.org/sq/vjosaparkkom-betartani/>



Figure 38: Landing page of the “Save the Blue Heart of Europe” Campaign

This central aim of the campaign fulfills all the paramount needs for the message to be understood and followed by all interested parties. It is plain, compelling and inspiring; through the objectives set in the campaign and the numerous activities integrated therein it is well-targeted, specifying through statistics and real world data that *“through a recent public opinion poll it was shown that 94% of Albanians are in favor of creating the Vjosa National Park”*; it clearly identifies the object of change of the status-quo and the envisaged transition, noting that *“A National Park would not only benefit the wildlife but also the people of the Vjosa valley through the exploitation of the potential for a sustainable socio-economic development. In the future, thousands of tourists from all over Europe will come to visit this last wild river of the continent”*; it focuses on the impact of the campaign, articulating what will make a difference in the

real world, as well as it is summarized in just a couple of sentences.

Having a centralized landing page for the purpose of information of the public on the main issues of the campaign, the envisaged change, the aims, objectives and potential benefits of the action is a key element for the information of the public with regards to your initiative, as well as it being a well-functioning information space for all interested parties, be that the public or the media.

The SBHE Campaign landing page not only provides for a summary of the objectives of the action, but also for the general information on the long term and recent developments in the river basin, including historical and mapping information on the danger faced by the river due to the numerous hydropower investments envisaged to be constructed on the river basin, as well cross referencing

links¹⁸ to a number of key documents on the developments in the Vjosa River preservation effort, as well as social media ongoing initiatives on the main sites such as Facebook¹⁹ and Instagram,²⁰ and a number of documentaries purpose made for the campaign, with more than 2 million views combined.²¹

In addition to the various information-based publications on the campaign's main page, affiliated websites, and social media, the campaign offers academic and scientific publications to ensure that all vital material is backed by scientific study and exploration.

Further to the information provided in the landing page of the campaign, a simplified, but yet detailed factsheet of the situation of the river basin and potential threats to the latter, is an additional compelling means of communication and information for all stakeholders interested not in just partaking in the campaign, but also to journalists wishing to cover the issue, interested third parties, or even passing readers. To this extent, the campaign has issued a condensed factsheet with all pertinent information on the topic, including here background information, threats to the river basin, current and potential developments in Albania and Greece, and the call to ac-

tion to become part of the initiative.²²

One key element in implementing a successful campaign and convincing the public to become part of it, through a meticulously crafted inbound strategy, is the provision and dissemination of the background information on the reasons and arguments for the necessity of the action, readily provided by the Vjosa Campaign through a secondary landing page aptly titled "The truth about Vjosa – *E vërteta mbi Vjosën in Albanian*".²³ The page provides key elements to a successful inbound marketing campaign, such as:

- Background information on the subject of the campaign;
- The dangers that threatened the subject of the campaign;
- The possibilities for benefit in case the campaign is successful and the inherent reasons for supporting the action, this supported also through a number of short videos and testimonies of key actors in the campaign;
- The chronology of all the activities and actions implemented in the framework of the initiative, be they at the national and the international level, with cross referencing links to all the activities as a further means of information for the interested public; as well as
- A testimony of the international support for the cause through conference, public relations campaigns, testimonies and social media campaigns by third parties.

18 <https://www.ecoalbania.org/sq/e-verteta-mbi-vjosen/>

19 <https://www.facebook.com/balkanrivers>

20 <https://www.instagram.com/blueheartrivers/>

21 Documentary "Vjosa Forever"- URL: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wloAo6KGrw> and Documentary "Blue Heart"- URL: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OhmHByZ0Xd8>

All this providing an excellent backdrop

22 http://www.ecoalbania.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/Vjosa-Aoos_FactSheet.pdf

23 <https://www.ecoalbania.org/sq/e-verteta-mbi-vjosen/>

for any person wishing to join the campaign even midway through the action, and clear examples of what can be achieved through the different media at anyone's disposal, be that through simple social media support, or first-hand participation in the different activities envisaged for the future.

The page furthermore provides also a collection of press releases and articles issued on the different objectives of the campaign, stretching for the last two years on different topics, such as the political game with the future of Europe's last wild river, issued in December 2020,²⁴ activists seeking European policy support for declaring the Vjosa in Albania a National Park, issued in March 2021,²⁵ and the latest example being the event of 30 national and international scientists studying the Vjosa branches, issued in June of 2021.²⁶

In the latest fact-finding research mission organized in May and June of 2021, for the purpose of bringing to the forefront the values of the river system and the danger posed to the environment by potential investments in the basin and its tributaries, a multidisciplinary team of scientists from Austria, Germany, Albania, and Italy collected data in Shushica and Bënça as well. Headed by Profes-

sor Fritz Schiemer (University of Vienna) and his Albanian colleague Prof. Aleko Miho (University of Tirana), the multidisciplinary team comprised of hydro-morphologists, botanists, algologists, aquatic and terrestrial invertebrate specialists, ichthyologists, ornithologists, herpetologists, self-cleaning process experts and groundwater ecologists concluded a study week with a trifold goal: informing the public; reaching strong conclusions that while hydropower plants are no longer a threat in Vjosa proper, its major branches remain vulnerable, as well as preparing the scientific information for use in potential civil and administrative litigation for the safeguard of the river basin and its tributaries.

Further to these instruments, the use of press releases and informative articles as a means of keeping up to date the different media outlets, as well as all affiliated actors is an excellent tool for keeping the attention of the latter and providing continuous ardor to the campaign, this performed either through specific sections in the landing page of the campaign, or dedicated websites for press coverage of all activities and calls to action of the organization.²⁷ This is furthermore augmented by the existence of a dedicated landing page for the relationship between the campaign and the media, in the form of a repository of all media related developments and achievements of the campaign.²⁸

24 <https://www.ecoalbania.org/sq/2020/12/17/vjosa-loja-politike-me-te-ardhmen-e-lumit-te-fundit-e-eger-te-evropes/>

25 <https://www.ecoalbania.org/sq/2021/03/22/aktivistet-kerkojne-mbeshitetjen-e-politikes-evropiane-per-shpalljen-e-vjoses-ne-shqiperi-si-park-kombetar/>

26 <https://www.ecoalbania.org/sq/2021/06/03/30-shkencetare-studiojne-deget-e-vjoses-te-dhenat-doperdoren-ne-gjyqet-kunder-hec-eve/>

27 <https://www.ecoalbania.org/sq/njoftime-per-shtyp/>

28 <https://www.ecoalbania.org/sq/ne-media/>



Figure 39: Stakeholders inclusion into a campaign

The engagement of stakeholders as well is a key priority in any campaign wishing to succeed in their goals and end objectives. This is achieved through:

The Save Vjosa campaign has consistently and successfully achieved these steps through a number of means: The campaign has not only provided the aim and goals of the campaign for all potential readers and partakers, but also provided calls to action to the general public to contact their representatives and future representatives to parliament through social media, in order for the campaign to become part of their main agenda, as well as successfully implemented actions with the scientific community and the general public to discourage any potential developments in the river basin, through conferences,²⁹ concerts,³⁰ documentary

premieres,³¹ international protests,³² academic³³ and public³⁴ petitions for the government.

Furthermore, the inclusion of third parties directly invested in the campaign, such as inhabitants of the area affected by the changes the campaign is aiming to hinder, or beneficiaries of the initiative, is a key component in a successful campaign. In the framework of the Save Vjosa Campaign, the implementing team has held many activities with the communities along the Vjosa river, whose input in the campaign ideals, goals and

living-rivers-and-against-dams-hundreds-at-concert-for-balkan-rivers

31 <https://www.facebook.com/events/648879089613691/?ref=newsfeed>

32 <https://balkanrivers.net/en/news/international-protest-against-the-destruction-of-europes-last-wild-river>

33 <https://balkanrivers.net/en/news/albanian-and-international-science-community-stands-up-against-damming-the-vjosa-river>

34 https://www.change.org/p/vjosa-national-park-the-only-way-to-save-vjosa/psf/promote_or_share?guest=existing&short_display_name=Roden&source_location=corgi

29 <https://www.ecoalbania.org/sq/2019/06/06/shpaloset-vizioni-per-vjosen-parku-i-pare-kombetar-i-lumit-te-eger-ne-evrope/>

30 <https://balkanrivers.net/en/news/music-for->



Figure 40: Photos from the "Vjosa National Park Now" actions in different cities around the world

envisaged results is invaluable.

For example, the campaign, as an integrated strategy towards reaching every actor in the effort to safeguard the river and the transformation of the Vjosa river basin into a national park, has implemented a number of activities for direct contact and support gathering with the communities and interest groups, ranging from protest in the community against oil exploration efforts near the river,³⁵ to meetings with journalists, experts and stakeholders for the continuous examination of the situation and strategy building,³⁶ to meetings near the subject of the campaign with civil society actors, local and international experts, inhabitants of the area and central and local government central

decision makers.³⁷ The inclusion of the latter, as key figures in the effort further sends a message of support to the cause and encourages uncertain, potential allies towards joining the cause and the campaign as either first hand contributors, or as amplifiers of the call to action and message disseminated.

The stakeholders on this issue can be construed as either local, regional, as well as international stakeholders. The cooperation with international organizations and press agencies has provided a wider pool of potential supporters, as well as an expansive support effort by international actors, from celebrities calling to action in key international institutions,³⁸ Nobel laureates,³⁹ to inter-

35 <https://www.ecoalbania.org/sq/2021/04/28/protesta-ne-permet-kunder-kerkimit-per-nafte-ne-luginen-e-vjoses/>

36 <https://www.ecoalbania.org/sq/2020/10/16/zhvillimi-i-qendrueshem-i-luginen-se-vjoses-mbledhne-takim-miqte-e-vjoses/>

37 <https://www.ecoalbania.org/sq/2020/09/25/aleanca-kunder-diges-se-kalivac-it-po-rritet/>

38 <https://www.ecoalbania.org/sq/2019/11/01/leonardo-dicaprio-ngre-zerin-per-vjosen/>

39 <https://www.ecoalbania.org/sq/2021/04/23/fitues-alternative-te-cmimit-nobel-mbeshtes-in-kauzen-vjosa-park-kombetar/>

national environmental organizations showing their support and urging national authorities to take the appropriate steps for the implementation of the goals of the campaign,⁴⁰ be that at the international level, or close cooperation for the implementation of the initiative at the local level, with organizations such as EURONATUR and Riverwatch.



Figure 41: *Leonardo DiCaprio speaking before the UN on climate change*

As stated earlier, in addition to direct first-hand contact with the stakeholders of the campaign, a media and social media coverage of the events, locally⁴¹ and internationally,⁴² as well as dissemination efforts of the call to action, is found to be one of the most effective means of keeping the public

40 <https://www.ecoalbania.org/sq/2019/09/25/dita-botorore-e-lumenjve-150-ojf-apel-per-mbrojtjen-e-vjoses/>
 41 <https://euronews.al/al/vendi/aktualitet/2021/06/02/aktivistet-vijojne-luften-per-te-ruajtur-vjosen-lumin-e-fundit-te-eger-te-europes/>
 42 <https://www.euronews.com/green/2021/05/31/campaigners-continue-to-fight-to-keep-europe-s-last-wild-river-truly-wild> and <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/environment/article/will-dams-spoil-one-of-europe-last-wild-rivers>

engaged with the campaign, as well as continuously putting pressure on all decision-making powers, through the multiplication of the message by engaged and active followers.

To this effect, the campaign has implemented a concerted effort on the coverage of the Save Vjosa campaign in a number of media outlets and formats, ranging from television outings of the heads of the campaign, explaining the threat to the Vjosa river and the benefits of its clarification as a national park, to the creation and maintenance of social media pages dedicated to the effort, through continuous and engaging content,⁴³ to the creation and dissemination of short videos,⁴⁴ snippets,⁴⁵ short documentaries,⁴⁶ informative videos on the efforts of the campaign,⁴⁷ as well as video based workshops and conferences covering the main aims, objectives, activities and efforts of the campaign,⁴⁸ on bot, Facebook as a main social media outlet, as well as YouTube, for more dedicated and high quality content.

This social media effort is complemented with the publication of a number of products also on supplementing services such as Instagram, and the

43 <https://www.facebook.com/balkanrivers>
 44 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YDuRM6uME8>
 45 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IXqCpg0KKj8>
 46 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ISusoUAddh0>
 47 <https://www.facebook.com/EcoAlbania.org/videos/2513410178783297/> and <https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=189736976411359>
 48 https://www.facebook.com/watch/live/?ref=watch_permalink&v=1365768000493309

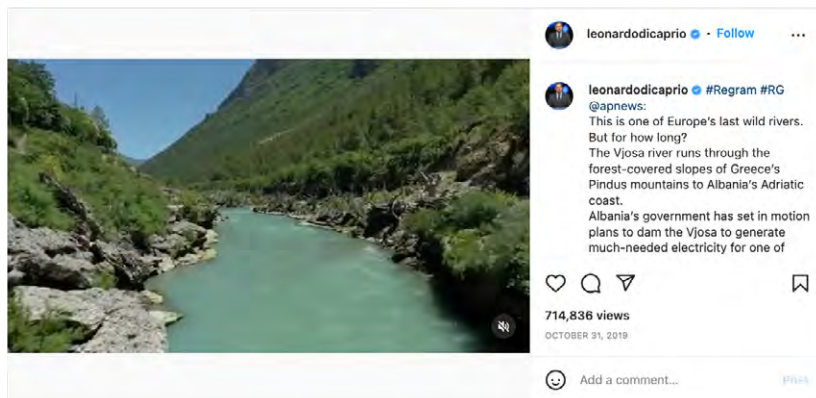


Figure 42: Leonardo DiCaprio supporting the "Save the Blue Heart of Europe" campaign

creation of dedicated profiles to the cause,⁴⁹ with continuous updates on the activities and ever evolving updates on the campaign.

The synergy between all these elements, the use of legacy media, direct first-hand activities with the beneficiaries, the inclusion of stakeholders in the matter, public discourse, social media and international public figures and institutions, is a perfect recipe for a successful campaign and the sway of potential followers/members/contributors to join the effort. To this extent, the Save Vjosa campaign has been one of the very few, if not the sole example of the successful campaigns in recent history, which has garnered not only local and regional support and audience, but also international assistance and acknowledgment, with more than 140 organizations supporting the effort,⁵⁰ and more than 750 Albanian

and international scientists of different disciplines signing a petition in 2019, directed at the Prime Minister of Albania for the latter to stop the Government's efforts to build hydroelectric dams on this water basin.

Furthermore, this support is evidenced also by the involvement in the campaign of such public, political and academic figures as Edward Norton,⁵¹ Virginijus Sinkevičius,⁵² Thomas Waitz,⁵³ and corporations⁵⁴ and international

International Rivers Day on the 22nd of September 2019, for Prime Minister Edi Rama to immediately stop all hydropower projects in the Vjosa watershed, until the implementation of a Strategic Environmental Assessment and the Integrated Basin Management Plan, which takes into account the social aspects and in particular the potential for the development of ecotourism.

51 <https://twitter.com/EdwardNorton/status/1374051481414897665?s=20&t=enikdy--jg-g5ot2xAK40UA>

52 https://twitter.com/VSinkevicius/status/13739207929521665?s=20&t=_VtkgtLBEe-2Jpfzsk85Gg

53 <https://twitter.com/thomaswaitz/status/1373915417983524865?s=20&t=6abMQkkQpyqDoJm2ikRxvg>

54 <https://twitter.com/patagoniaeuropa/status/1461658584517906436?s=20&t=6abMQkkQpyqDoJm2ikRxvg>

49 <https://www.instagram.com/bluehearttrivers/>

50 149 organizations have signed a petition on the



Figure 43: Public billboard in Tirana, Albania

organizations⁵⁵ dedicated to environmental protection.

Lately, the campaign has started its efforts anew, with the implementation of a wide encompassing drive, including a multitude of elements and avenues, such as the use of social media on a number of channels on Instagram, the EcoAlbania Instagram profile⁵⁶ as well as the BlueHeartRivers profile,⁵⁷ with continuous and almost daily updates on the campaign, with updates and activities analogous profiles on other social media outlets such as Facebook⁵⁸ as well as an energetic campaign on Twitter with the #VjosaNationalParkNow at the center of the multimedia campaign.

At the same time, the SBHE campaign has been supplemented by month-

ly posting of video content on the EcoAlbania YouTube channel with short promotional videos and long format documentaries produced in collaboration with close partners⁵⁹, as well as public billboards in the capital of Albania, showcasing the beauties of the river, and redirecting QR codes, which upon scanning link the users to the dedicated landing page of the campaign.

5.4 Administrative Action as a Cornerstone for Success

Administrative and legal action, as a final step toward achieving the campaign's goals, is a realistic option for many civil society organizations, which can be aided in their efforts by sister organizations specializing in the subject. Nothing and no one can be above the law in a democratic system. As a result, employing the law to further your cause can be a very powerful strategy. In this regard, EcoAlbania has faced numerous challenges, including a

55 <https://twitter.com/EuroNaturORG/status/1489190290430865410?s=20&t=6abMQkkQpyqDoJm2ikRxvg>

56 <https://www.instagram.com/p/CVdRiwTLY4E/>

57 <https://www.instagram.com/blueheartrivers/>

58 <https://www.facebook.com/balkanrivers> and <https://www.facebook.com/EcoAlbania.org>

59 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UvE3fvqsq8>

victorious court battle, in the case of the campaign to protect the Vjosa.⁶⁰

A legal battle might begin with something as basic as a request for information, a petition, or an administrative appeal on a specific subject. When filing a lawsuit in court, however, the legal battle becomes more tangible and visible. In this regard, the Vjosa case is significant in Albanian history because it was the first environmental case to be filed in court and eventually won.

International judicial institutions, such as conventions and international courts, can be involved in legal fights. As a result, the Vjosa matter has been reported to a number of relevant conventions, including the Berne Convention, the Aarhus Convention, the Energy Community,

and others. In this setting, not only has the issue been internationalized, but it has also received strong backing from the institutions listed. This could result in even more pressure being placed on Albanian decision-makers on the Vjosa. The formation of the group "Lawyers for Rivers" is another effort in this direction. This group aspires to provide legal experts, primarily lawyers, who will address future environmental challenges.

All these measures, be they administrative in nature, calls to action, public measures, as well as direct intervention with the beneficiaries and stakeholders have shown that a well thought out and strategized campaign can have effective outcome and can become powerful building blocks towards discernable change.

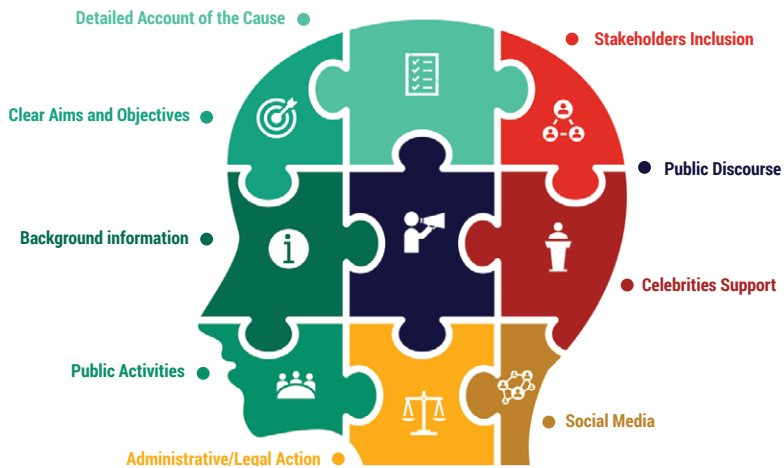


Figure 44: Essential elements for a successful campaign

60 <https://balkanrivers.net/en/news/albanian-court-stops-dam-project-on-the-vjosa>



6

PRACTICAL EXAMPLES

6.1 Worksheet for creating an annual nonprofit marketing plan



Figure 45: Elements of a successful marketing plan

6.2 Nonprofit social media strategy outline – One Week Planning

Here is a quick overview (Figure 44) of some dos and don'ts that will be helpful as an organization tries to grow an online community and engage followers in a campaign of the organization.

Use this document (Figure 45) to ideate and document your nonprofit's social media strategy for specific campaigns, set goals track performance and measure results:

- Organization Name:
- Document Creator:
- Active Networks (check if used) and provide URL:

✓ DO	DO NOT ✗
<p>Change with the times - Social media platforms are always changing and evolving. Organizations must always be ready to adapt to these developments and make necessary adjustments to their strategy</p>	<p>Post just to make your daily posting quotas - If you have nothing worthwhile to say, it's best not to say anything at all.</p>
<p>Post with a purpose - There's a reason an organization has a social media presence. Stay committed to your mission and share stuff that supports it.</p>	<p>Use low-resolution photographs - Each article is a direct representation of the organization. A poor-quality shot represents poor judgment and a missed opportunity for connection</p>
<p>Use the right tools for the job - Choose the right tools for the job. Instead of using a photo sharing site, utilize a social networking site to create an online community</p>	<p>Post messages that are generic and irrelevant - Be sincere and considerate of your listeners' time. Share something that will make their experience better.</p>
<p>Content should be integrated and promoted across many channels. Repurpose content and distribute it on other platforms, but make sure to tweak it to take advantage of the platform's features.</p>	<p>Respond to negative remarks in a pejorative tone - If an organization's policy is to respond to unfavorable comments, do so in a positive tone and whenever possible, give a solution.</p>
<p>Always be timely and appropriate for the venue and audience - Posts and comments should be both methodical and spontaneous, and always relevant.</p>	<p>Share too much information - Be careful not to overwhelm your readers with too much information. Avoid disclosing too much personal information.</p>
<p>Maintain a high level of activity and engagement - Engagement is essential for success. If maintaining an active presence on a platform is impossible, it may be best to reevaluate the platform's goal.</p>	<p>When you're sharing, always be humble. However, it is okay to congratulate yourself on your accomplishments</p>
<p>Share numerous posts per day - When possible, maximize exposure by sharing posts at various times of the day, taking into account different time zones. Grab the attention of people who might have missed a previous post.</p>	<p>Overpost - Know your target audience and post material that is relevant and timely. Quality takes precedence over quantity.</p>

Figure 46: Do-s and don't-s of engaging a community to your cause

	Page URL	Page Admins	Password
	Username		Password
	Username		Password
	Page URL	Page Admins	Password
	Username		Password
Other Social Media	Page URL	Page Admins	Password

Figure 47: Social media table of links for an NGO

Scheduling of social media posts and publications

MONDAY	WEDNESDAY	FRIDAY
1 st Post ⌚ 10:00	1 st Post ⌚ 10:00	1 st Post ⌚ 10:00
2 nd Post ⌚ 14:00	2 nd Post ⌚ 14:00	2 nd Post ⌚ 14:00
TUESDAY	THURSDAY	SATURDAY
1 st Post ⌚ 10:00	1 st Post ⌚ 10:00	1 st Post ⌚ 10:00
2 nd Post ⌚ 14:00	2 nd Post ⌚ 14:00	2 nd Post ⌚ 14:00

Figure 48: Social media content posting schedule template

6.3 Sample Press Release Example

Tirana, 10 November 2021

Media notice/Invitation

15TH ANNIVERSARY OF SAVE THE ENVIRONMENT ORGANIZATION

The Save the Environment Organization, since its founding in 2006 has become a pillar of the community of experts and environment lovers for the safeguard of Albanian National Parks and rivers. From the start of its activities, the SEO has helped in safeguarding the status of 8 National Parks, the inclusion of a further 5 into the National Registry and the development of sustainable programs for the strengthening of ecofriendly proliferation of tourism and SME-s in national river basis.

On the occasion of the 15th anniversary of the foundation of the SEO, international and local experts, volunteers, scientists and activists will convene in a national forum to discuss recent developments in the sphere, best practices and mutual difficulties and how to overcome them.

The Forum will take place on

Monday, December 12th, at 9:00 a.m.
Tirana International Hotel
Room Teuta, Second Floor

Open to media, kindly invited

For further information inquests please contact

John Smith

Organization Coordinator

Phone: +355...

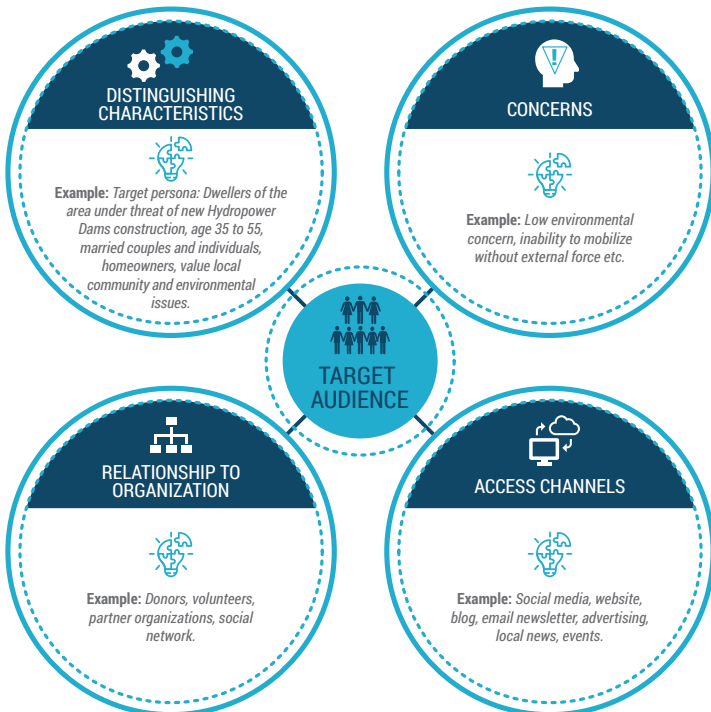
Mobile: +355...

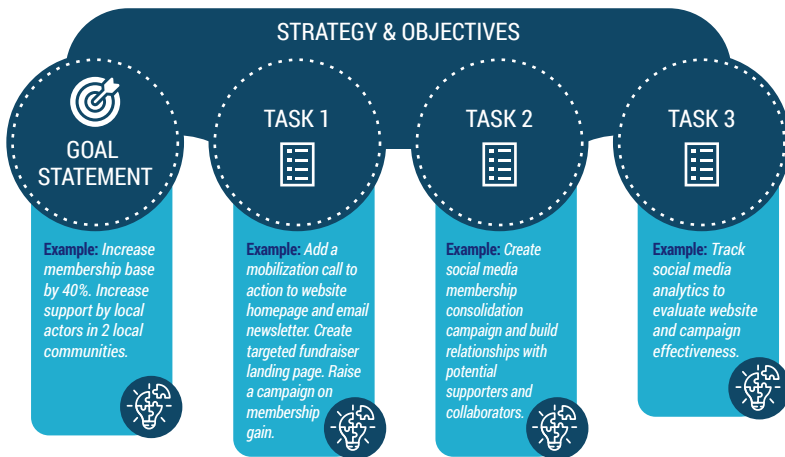
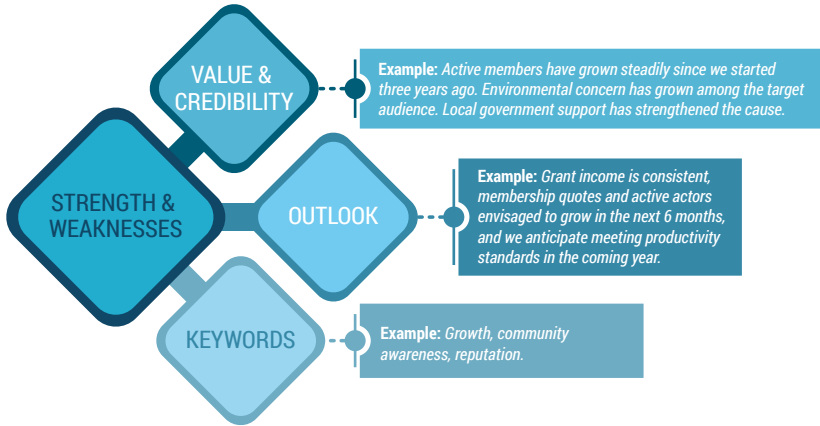
Email: Johnsmith@seo.al

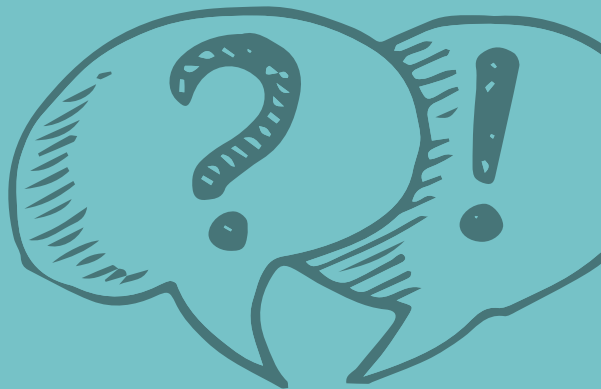
Web: www.seo.al

Figure 49: Effective press release for a public event

6.4 Sample CSO Organizational Plan for a Campaign







7

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

It is no longer sufficient to do the right thing and be the instrument of change for the community you represent. There are millions of non-governmental organizations around the world, many of which are attempting to save the world, or at least their neck of the woods, in their own unique way: some are implementing educational programs for illiterate people, others are combating poverty or human trafficking, numerous are battling climate change and still others are providing assistance to disabled people or people suffering from rare diseases. The causes of civil society are innumerable. They're all doing the right thing, and the results are fantastic. The main issue is that non-governmental organiza-

tions do not devote enough attention to communicating what they are doing. When a private company invests in a community project, we see press releases and all kinds of media promotion through all channels, whereas NGO's prefer to just do their job, publish news on their website once in a while, and occasionally post messages on their Facebook page. However, this is no longer sufficient.

To carry out their missions, NGOs rely on funding from businesses, governments, foundations, and individuals, they rely on the cooperation of numerous actors in their field, and for their objective and campaigns to be effective they need the attention and eyes and ears of the general public.

It is not an option to communicate aimlessly without a strategy and a well-defined plan. NGO's must learn how to tell their story if they want to increase their impact in the community and receive more grants and funding. They must reach out to people's hearts in order to persuade them to become partners and supporters of their projects.

This manual is a first step attempt intended to serve as a guide for CSOs on how to:

- **Integrate and use technology to advance their respective organizations, causes and campaigns;**
- **Make use of both traditional and social media to encourage citizen participation and change; and**
- **Create real-time and direct interaction and organizing to strengthen mutual cooperation and synergy among CSOs, government institutions, and citizens.**

When media and visibility operations are strategically incorporated as part of an organization's outreach, program design and implementation, and monitoring and evaluation efforts, they are most effective. With this in mind, the guide is designed to be used as a local capacity-building tool to help organizations, their staff, and members deliver more impact.

It is very important that the communication process taking place between civil society and the media be all the time assessed in light of the fact that media are not only a stakeholder to CSOs, but even more so, the channel through which civil

society can reach other stakeholders that are crucial to them and their mission.

Collaboration between the media and civil society organizations has a lot of potential. CSO representatives may act as authoritative commentators and specialists in news articles, and media outlets can help CSOs get their views out to a larger audience. Addressing the connection between media and CSOs may be useful whether trying to aid a fledging media industry, build an emerging CSO community, or push a reform agenda in any sector.

Educating CSOs and media outlets on their respective roles and responsibilities in society is insufficient to foster true synergy. It is also necessary to examine mechanisms for developing shared interests. One of the first steps towards building a symbiotic relationship is recognizing the weakness and strongpoints of each actor, their role, their functions and how they can complement each other.

In building this manual, one key aspect taken under consideration is the best and most effective means of communication with the media sector, and in particular journalists who can help you with your cause.

Frequently, CSOs' activities, projects, and efforts are neglected, misinterpreted, or distorted by the media, with issues such as the media being uninterested in CSOs' activities; journalists lacking competence to cover various CSO issues, in many cases expressing CSO problems in a superficial manner with mistakes and

a political slant. Sometimes, CSOs lack funding and time to interact with the media; they regularly submit media news clips, which are either ignored or used to gather information, no one attends CSO press conferences and most times journalists only call when they have anything to report on CSOs.

Working with traditional media is a hard job. One must cultivate his relationship with the actors in this media sector, must care after this relation, and try to include into its activities public events that enticing to traditional media and the latter may attend.

Any group seeking media attention for its cause must have a comprehensive media plan in place. With no media strategy, you would spend every day reacting to the agenda rather than influencing it. Press secretary or media advocate for a non-profit organization may need to undertake an internal campaign to educate colleagues on the value of an active, planned, and directed media strategy. You must make it clear to your colleagues that mere mention of your organization in press coverage regarding your problems is insufficient.

In order to have an effective media strategy, an organization needs to:

- **Commit money and time to its media strategy;**
- **Choose the cause on which the media advocacy activities will be focused;**
- **Specify the targeted media coverage a campaign seeks (newspapers, radio, and television; national radio or billboards; local news outlets; article**

- placement; or a mix of media);**
- **Determine the demographic target of the campaign;**
- **Tailor the messages to the target audiences' interests, values, and experiences;**
- **Use the appropriate tools for the campaign (reports, lawsuits, legislative acts, elections, meetings, and public events);**
- **Create a detailed timeline for activities**

At the same time, the use of traditional media, in a world where 4 billion people use online social media, is not enough to get your message across. To build a strong digital presence, NGO-s need a social media strategy that focuses on getting people to engage with their message.

Thus, the most important thing for organizations is to ask themselves a few questions:

- **What social networks their target audiences use (they should have accounts on social networks where your target audiences are, otherwise they are wasting their resources on platforms where their messages are not reaching the desired target groups)?**
- **Are they communicating the same message across all of your social media accounts while maintaining their uniqueness?**
- **What activities do organizations want their target audience to participate in (activist campaigns, information dissemination, donations)? NGO-s need to tailor their messages and social media channels and campaigns to their target audience's interests and needs based on their goals.**

The main takeaway from the social media manual, with regards to having a digi-

tal presence for NGO-s is:

- Choose the right social media network: NGO-s need to try to target their audience on networks or channels where they are active. It's pointless to have a Twitter account if the target demographics don't use the social media platform;
- If organizations want to get people's attention, they need to be more visual and present ideas visually. They need to provide a variety of media: Tell stories, and use impact stories that are short and to-the-point; Use photos, video, and activities from the public events; Set up a YouTube channel and post videos of the events and activities therein. People will be more engaged if organizations ask them to upload videos of their own work;
- While visual data is important, organizations provide access to in-depth articles, reports, news, and information for those who prefer to read;
- Keeping it simple is paramount: NGO-s need to avoid using convoluted messages. They must attempt to write short, simple phrases that will allow people to understand and like them;
- They must be aware of their content: Make an effort to make their network messages useful and interactive. They need to ask questions because they generate a lot of interaction, and publicly thank their supporters (when they receive donations, when they organize an event and volunteers helped them prepare it or other situations where they have received help and they are grateful for it);
- Organizations need to integrate all of their media: Link their website to mobile phones, their Twitter account to Facebook, and both of them to their website. Organize challenges for their supporters or involve volunteers in

their online promotion to involve people in their work. Try to convey to their audience that they are active and that they have a large number of people to rely on;

- Volunteers and collaborators should be encouraged to contribute to the organization's activities and online efforts towards their campaigns. It's critical to tell real stories and humanize all of their campaigns so that people are more enthusiastic;
- NGO-s need to know who their online influencers are, and try to keep them close and up to date so that they can reach larger audiences with their messages;
- And finally, following all the online posting, messaging, communicating and campaigning, NGO-s need to conduct a thorough analysis of the successes and failures of the campaign, what worked, and what flopped, as a means of remedying faults and pushing even harder in areas where the means and message was successful.

Traditional and online social media are two different faces of the same coin. Despite their core differences on how they operate, and lately, who their core target audience is, the human element, and what the final results of a specific campaign remain the same. NGO-s may use these mediums of communication based on their budget constraints, how fast they wish their message to be conveyed, or what visual elements to use. However, one key element that needs to be kept as the mast of any media effort is the *"the message needs to carry the final purpose of the campaign as clearly as possible, to engage and encourage viewers/listeners towards action"*.

8

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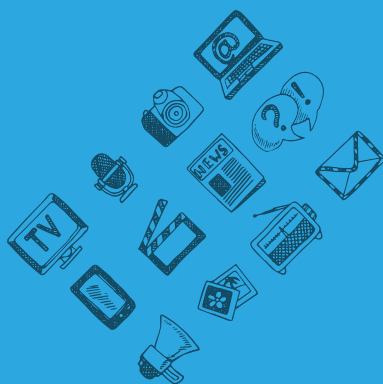
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