

Media Communications Guide Basics

STEP 1: Build a Media List

Make a comprehensive media list for your town or region – BUILD A DATABASE!

- 1.) **Print Media** - Start with print media. Include daily papers at the top of the list followed by weeklies, monthlies, specialty magazines, and newsletters. Do not forget student newspapers! List them alphabetically by organization and include the main contacts, i.e., Sports Editor, Environmental News Editor, Entertainment Editor, Outdoor Writer, Film Critic, Lifestyle Editor, Community Events Columnist, or whoever you think is appropriate. The entertainment section is a great placement.
- 2.) **Specialty Publications** - Many local communities have specialty publications that come out seasonally and are geared to special audiences: sports, music, events, tourists, seniors, or parents.
- 3.) **Broadcast outlets: radio and television stations** - For radio, list the news/sports/entertainment directors. Do you have a community radio station? And do not forget campus stations. For TV stations, look for community news producers, talk show hosts and film reviewers. Even some of the larger TV stations have community calendars – do not neglect the big guys.
- 4.) **Internet magazines** - Do you have a local website that features special or community events?
- 5.) **Newsletters** – printed and electronic: Sierra Club, community clubs, kayak groups – think email lists, too.

STEP 2: Create a Press Kit

We provide you with a sample press release, film synopses, film stills, and festival facts. Armed with all this information you should be set to build a Press Kit.

1. **Press Release:** Adjust the press release sample following for your particular screening. Make sure to include a contact number and all of the W's (who, what, when, why, where, etc).
2. **Digital Images:** An article is more likely to run if there are images available. Most media prefer electronic submissions of all the press materials, but confirm the submission guidelines.
3. **Film Program:** provide a list of films you are screening with synopses. Include information about the filmmakers.
4. **Festivals Facts:** Include info about the Wild & Scenic Film Festival and SYRCL.
5. **Organization Overview:** Background information on your organization.
6. **Contact Information:** Be sure to let the media know who to contact for more information.

STEP 3: Contacting the media

1. **Daily papers:** About 2-3 weeks before your event
2. **Monthly papers:** At least 1-2 months (depending on their deadline)
3. **Weekly papers:** At least 1 month
4. **Radio and television stations:** Allow 2 weeks for radio and television stations. Note: PSA's can go in by fax/email/mail much earlier.

STEP 4: Conduct interviews

1. Arrange newspaper interviews with the WSFF's Tour Team. We love to help get you PR!
2. Arrange newspaper interviews with a filmmaker. A story about a film can give the festival tangibility.

3. Arrange an interview with your local radio station—call them to set up 1-2 interviews within 3 weeks of the event. Telephone interviews with someone from the WSFF staff can also be conducted for radio.

STEP 5: Follow-Up

1. Media appreciate knowing you liked what they did. A call or a thank you note will make their day – handwritten notes to people who have helped you are key! Write a kudos or Letter to the Editor thanking the community, the sponsors, and the volunteers publicly.
2. Write down all the notes on what you did – all your sources of promo. It's helpful for next year.