



TIPS FOR GENERATING MEDIA

HOLDING AN EVENT

A media event features groups of people doing something visually interesting, often outside. Ideally, both the action and the setting symbolize or evoke the campaign message. Keep in mind when planning a media event that a reporter will not attend unless it delivers real news, for example announcing a significant new development in your campaign. These are especially interesting to reporters if you spice them up with good visual images.

Before the Event

- 1. Choose a Good Location, Generally Outside.** Where you hold an event can greatly impact the story you end up generating. Location tells a story. Ideally, you should hold your event outside in a location that is symbolically or concretely related to your message and campaign. The location should be safe, easy to reach, conveniently located for the media, and have good access to parking. Be aware of the weather forecast if you decide to hold your event outside. Have a rain location planned and inform the attending reporters well in advance if the location is changed.
- 2. Choose a Good Day.** The best days to hold a media event are Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. Mondays are not ideal because it is difficult to do reminder calls over the weekend. Fridays are not ideal because fewer people watch the news on a Friday night or read the Saturday paper. If you choose to hold it on a Monday, remind reporters on Friday and again Monday morning. Weekends can be difficult because there are significantly fewer reporters working. If it must be over the weekend, alert the weekend assignment editors well in advance.
- 3. Choose a Good Time.** You should not plan a conference before 9:30 a.m. because not all reporters will be able to make it that early. Nor should you hold it later than 2 p.m. because many reporters will not be able to meet their deadlines for filing stories.
- 4. Alert Reporters Ahead of Time.** Send out a written advisory (preferably by fax or email) a few days ahead of time, but be careful not to scoop yourself. Use our sample advisory if unfamiliar with the proper format. The advisory should include the five "W"s (who, what, where, when, why) of your event, but should **not** reveal the core of your news. In other words, the advisory shouldn't tell the whole story.
- 5. Use "Daybooks".** A daybook is a computerized calendar of media events maintained usually by the local newswire (Associated Press, Reuters, or regional wire service) and sent electronically into newsrooms. The assignment editors regularly consult them. You should fax a copy of your news advisory to the local newswire service and call to confirm that your event will be included in the daybook.
- 6. Prepare a Press Kit.** A press kit should be provided to every reporter when they sign in. These should include a news release summarizing the story, a list of speakers including full name and title (and biographical information, if possible), fact sheets, backgrounders that support your position, and any other relevant material. You should also be sure to deliver or send a press kit after the event to reporters who did not attend.



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7. **Prepare the Speakers.** Anticipate tough questions ahead of time. You may want to make a list of questions and practice delivering short, quotable answers. Hold a practice event to polish your statements and ensure that the speakers are not too repetitive (or, even worse, contradict each other).
8. **Set Up the Location.** If possible, you should offer reporters juice, coffee, tea and ice water. You should provide a podium that has a Green-Pink sign on the front so it is in all camera shots, and should also hang Green-Pink signs or banners behind the speakers. There should be space toward the back of the room for TV cameras and a table near the front for radio reporters. Definitely have one or two greeters with a sign in sheet so you know who attended and who did not.
9. **Make Pitch Calls.** Call key reporters the day before your event and ask if they received your news advisory. If not, offer to send it again. Explain what the topic of the event will be but, again, do not give too much information. Convince the reporter that this topic will be of interest and is important to her audience.

During the Event

10. **Use Visuals.** Any good visuals, including pictures, charts, graphs, or maps will increase your chances of getting coverage. Your news advisory should note that there are "excellent photo opportunities," if that's the case. You should also include a description of what the photo opportunity will be.
11. **Don't Be Late.** Start the conference within five minutes of the designated starting time. Begin by introducing yourself and the speakers, and then move right into people's comments.
12. **Limit Number of Speakers.** When planning the event, organize your key points and have no more than four speakers. Try to present a diverse range of voices. Four people of the same age, sex and race all representing environmental groups are less interesting than a diverse panel representing religious, health, labor and environmental organizations. Additional people can stand behind the podium to answer questions later in the news conference if necessary. Each speaker should limit his remarks to four minutes or less.
13. **Answer Questions.** After all the speakers have made their statements, the event should be opened for questions. Each question should be answered at the podium so that microphones pick up the quotes. Requests for one-on-one questions after the interview are fairly standard, particularly by TV and radio stations that may want to polish up a sound bite from the news conference.

After the Event

14. **Follow Up.** After the event, deliver press kits to any key reporters who did not attend. Make calls to key reporters or outlets that did not attend to offer a one-on-one interview. You should be available by telephone as quickly as possible after the event so reporters can contact you with additional questions.



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GREEN-PINK TALKING POINTS

Hi! (Greeting...) How would you like to join a movement that protects women and the environment, worldwide?

Well, let me tell you a little about the Green-Pink Project. I'm a volunteer with the (Group Name), and we're working to raise awareness and funds to bridge the gap between women's rights, global health and the environment. Did you know that investing in women's basic rights—to health care, education and economic opportunity—is crucial for alleviating poverty, creating healthy families and communities, and conserving our natural resources?

(Memorize 1-2 powerful phrases to engage people, but don't read them)

- Globally, women make up 70% of the world's poor and are primarily responsible for collecting basic resources, like water and fuel. Because of this, women often bare the brunt of environmental degradation. (9)
- A women's educational level can determine the size, health and economic well-being of her family. In some areas of the world, an illiterate woman will have an average of 3.5 more children than her literate counterpart. (10)
- A study by the United Nations Population Fund showed that when women have access to voluntary family planning they choose to have smaller families. In turn, women are better able to manage their resources and participate in decision-making that affects the health of their communities and the environment. (11)

Yet, reproductive health conditions are the leading cause of women's ill health and death worldwide. One woman dies every minute from *preventable*, pregnancy-related causes.

Have you heard of obstetric fistula?

- Obstetric fistula is a devastating childbirth injury that affects women and girls living in poverty in the developing world, who don't have access to quality reproductive health care. When they're in labor, the baby gets stuck, and since there is no C-section to relieve the pressure, they can spend anywhere from one to seven days trying to push the baby out. Usually, the baby dies, and the woman is left with a hole between her bladder and vagina, and sometimes her rectum as well. Fistula sufferers leak urine, and sometimes feces, causing others to shun them. Most are relegated to the edges of society, and their suffering and isolation is life-long. This injury affects more than 2 million women worldwide!

BUT, did you know that fistula is both preventable and treatable?

- On average, fistula repair surgery costs a mere \$300. Such treatment enables young women to return to society and teach other women about obstetric fistula and the importance of reproductive health care.

We are trying to raise \$300 to transform the life of a woman living with fistula. By contributing for fistula care, you help women with fistula find their voice to protect their health, their children's health and the earth for future generations! (give them the Green-Pink donation form on a clipboard, with pen attached) Plus, you're uniting the "green" and "pink" movements! Will you join our effort?

Thanks! Here is a sticker and/or condom. Feel free to take any fact-sheets that you like, and share them with your friends! Thanks!



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SAMPLE MEDIA ADVISORY

News Advisory

For immediate release: (DATE)

Contact: (YOUR NAME), (YOUR PHONE NUMBER)

(GROUP NAME) Hosts Green-Pink Party to Unite Women's and Environmental Movements

(CITY, STATE)—On (DAY), (DATE), at (TIME), (GROUP NAME) is hosting a Green-Pink Party to connect issues of women's global health and rights, and the environment. The party is also meant to raise \$300 in order to save the life of a woman living with a reproductive health injury in the developing world, obstetric fistula.

This event is part of the Green-Pink Project, sponsored by the Sierra Club and One by One, a nonprofit organization committed to ending fistula. The campaign encourages volunteers across the country to host their own events in an effort to raise women's voices to protect their health, their children's health and the earth.

Who: (YOUR NAME, GROUP TITLE)

What: (GROUP NAME) to host Green-Pink Party to unite women's and environmental movements

When: (DATE, TIME)

Where: (LOCATION)

This event will include great photo opportunities.

Snacks and drink to be served.

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SAMPLE FEATURE ARTICLE

Taking Green-Pink Outdoors in Marathon County

A former Fulbright Scholar, Ned Grossnickel is an environmental science professor at the University of Wisconsin-Marathon County, who has been active in his local Sierra Club chapter for 15 years.

A long-time environmentalist, Grossnickel is committed to improving the conditions in which women in the developing world are living. The week before finals at University of Wisconsin, Ned threw a “Green-Pink Party” to protect women and the environment, worldwide. Students, coworkers, friends and members of the local Sierra Club came to his house for a day of Frisbee, canoeing, kayaking, and cruising on a pontoon boat. Following a potluck dinner, the group watched two films detailing the links between women’s health and the environment and had a discussion session on the issues.

In total, Grossnickel raised \$400 to save the life of a woman living in the developing world, suffering from a reproductive health injury called obstetric fistula. Says Grossnickel, “These issues are very dear to me, they are my hobby, not my work. For me this is fun, something I believe is absolutely vital for a better future for the world...both domestically and internationally.”

To get involved with the Green-Pink Project, visit www.sierraclub.org/population/greenpink, or e-mail greenpink@fightfistula.org.