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Working with Your Local Media

The Ad Council engages leaders at national media companies to secure hundreds of millions of dollars worth of donated media annually on behalf of all Ad Council campaigns. To further solidify our relationship at the local level, Regional Managing Directors are deployed to the top 100 markets to champion campaign messages, thereby securing local donated media.

This multi-layered media outreach strategy maximizes national and local support to deliver premier media placements, nearly 70% of which air in highly coveted times during the day and early evening.

PSA Directors (PSDs) receive many PSAs in a typical month and have indicated that they place a priority on PSAs that benefit their local community. Having the Ad Council logo propels our spots to the top of the list because of their quality and the importance of the messages we brand. In fact, nine out of 10 PSDs reported placing an Ad Council PSA as part of their media mix.

The majority of donated media time and space is given by the local media. While the government requires the broadcast media to conduct public service, it does not require a specific amount. And because the demand for advertising is high, the media cannot donate as much time and space to public service advertising. That is why grassroots involvement in campaign outreach can have a critical impact.

As community members, you have a unique opportunity to reach out to the PSA Directors in your community, supplementing our efforts, to convince PSDs that these messages are important to their audiences.

MEDIA TIPS:

News and talk radio stations are typically most supportive of PSAs. They may also be willing to have someone from your organization on the air for an interview, particularly if the issue is topical and in the news.

What Can You Do?

As a local partner, you can play a role in raising awareness about the Ad Council's Recycling Campaign by sharing the PSAs with your friends and colleagues through social media, and by contacting your local PSDs to encourage them to run these PSAs. Local media directors listen to



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their residents and grassroots organizations, and they are more likely to run PSAs that address issues that matter most to their local communities. Make it known that this is an important issue and help us get the message on the air!

Take the following steps:

1. Appeal directly to the PSA Directors
 - a. Meet with them personally to develop a relationship, or leverage an existing relationship you may have
 - b. Maintain contact with them to reinforce the importance of the issue (i.e. sending news articles or information as appropriate or checking in at key time periods)
2. Demonstrate the issue's importance to the local community
 - a. Share statistics that have local relevance
 - b. Talk about events taking place in your area
3. If applicable, offer your expertise as a resource to the media
 - a. Be available for interviews
 - b. Offer local statistics and research
 - c. Provide information for their news station's web site
4. Point out the benefits of the PSA to the media outlet
 - a. The PSA issue complements the station's programming or news angle
 - b. It improves the image of the media in the community
 - c. It provides high quality advertising for otherwise empty space or time

Develop a List of Targets

Concentrate on the local TV stations that you watch, the radio station that you listen to, the newspaper that you read, the cable provider that sends you a cable bill, etc. These companies make up the media in your community.

Media Type	Description	Who to Contact
Television Broadcast affiliates Independent stations	These stations produce their own local news and also sell advertising to local businesses. Many of these stations are affiliates of a broadcast	Public Affairs Director Community Affairs Director General Manager



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network like ABC, CBS, NBC, FOX, WB or UPN.

For instance, in Atlanta the ABC affiliate is WSB-TV. Be sure to contact the staff at your equivalent of WSB-TV and not at the national ABC television network.

Cable Cable systems	Call the company listed on your cable bill, and try to contact all the cable systems in your area. Cable stations often have more time available to broadcast PSAs.	Advertising Director Marketing Director General Manger
Radio	Contact the radio stations that reach your target audience. Radio stations are formatted for very specific audiences.	Public Affairs Director Community Affairs Director General Manager
Newspapers	Newspapers are the most difficult medium in which to place PSAs, because they can print only the number of pages needed to fit the articles and paid advertisements for that day. Try to persuade local papers to use these ads in a meaningful and timely way.	Director of Advertising Editor-in-Chief

Initial Contact with the PSA Director

The first time you contact (by phone, email or letter) a member of the media in your community, try to set up a meeting. You'll find that PSA Directors are generally people concerned with the community and may make time to see you. Most PSDs are familiar with the Ad Council and know that the Ad Council represents "issue-experts." They trust that Ad Council PSAs are generally of high quality.

Familiarize yourself with the PSAs in the Recycling Campaign toolkit.

In the initial phone call, introduce yourself and explain that you would like to meet to discuss your organization's role in the community and the Recycling Campaign. Be prepared to suggest a date and time as well as several alternatives.



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Introduce Yourself

Once you locate the right person, contact them with basic information about the campaign.

- Tell them why you are writing or calling (I want to meet with you; I want you to run these PSAs)
- Give them two or three vital statistics pertinent to your community
- Inform them of any recent news stories that focus on this issue
- Briefly explain the goal and strategy of the campaign and how it will benefit their viewers, listeners or readers (refer to national outreach email)
- Personalize the issue for the PSA Directors (frame the issue around a local event or the media outlet's programming)
- Outline next steps (set a meeting date, send the PSA)
- Provide your contact information

Prepare a Recycling Campaign packet to bring to your meeting. The packet can include:

- Letter to the PSA Director
- Facts about the issue of recycling
- Campaign fact sheet
- TV storyboard and scripts
- DVD and/or a broadcast quality version (beta-SP tape) of the TV spot
- CD of radio spot and radio scripts

CALL THE MEDIA:

- After Earth Day or around America Recycles Day (Nov. 15)
- If recycling is in the news
- Around any upcoming advocacy events

These resources are available to download on the www.PSACentral.org or the Recycling Campaign toolkit. For hard copies of materials, contact the Ad Council's Amanda Bagwill at abagwill@adcouncil.org.

Keep in mind that media outlets can order the PSAs by contacting the Ad Council's fulfillment center, CI Group. Note: Ad Council orders will be fulfilled for media only.



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The Meeting

When you meet with the media, you need to know what you are asking them to do and what you are trying to accomplish. Do your research – you want to find out which social issues are important to the company you are visiting, how they support those issues, and events that they sponsor. This may uncover an opportunity for you to partner on an event or respond to an incident in your community.

Do...

- Show the PSAs
- Discuss the PSAs
- Make a personal connection
- Point out local relevance constantly

Don't...

- Assume they understand the importance of recycling
- Be unprepared. Know the goals, benefits and materials available

Sample Questions:

- Does your station/newspaper/magazine have a specific policy regarding public service advertising?
- Are you focusing on any particular public service or community initiatives?
- Are there opportunities to partner with you on upcoming events?
- How can we be a resource to your station?

Be Prepared – Possible Responses to the Campaign

We produce our own station campaigns.

Let's work together. We can support and enhance your public service initiatives by providing up-to-date information and research as well as local resources (i.e., 1-800-number, websites, etc.). We can be a resource for you.



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We have a policy against supporting any PSAs.

Try to find out why. This policy may be based on a misconception. Mention that this is an Ad Council campaign. Some stations will air PSAs from the Ad Council because of the production quality and the rigorous vetting process.

This is not an important issue to our community.

Discuss the issue on a local level. Share statistics and results that you have seen in the community since the onset of the campaign. Has the campaign issue been in the news lately?

Follow Up

After your meeting or phone call, follow up.

- Send a thank you note to your contact
- Provide any follow up materials that you promised

Questions?

For more information, please contact Amanda Bagwill, Ad Council Campaign Director, at abagwill@adcouncil.org.