

The Sources **HotLink**

Tips and Practical Ideas to Get Positive News Coverage

Number Five, Autumn 1997

Corporate Volunteering

All organizations desire a positive image. Corporate volunteering is a way to gain exposure at a local and national level, while sustaining the values in which you believe.

Publicity is a benefit of corporate volunteering, but volunteering is also a reward in itself. Gather ideas from your staff and decide on how to make the best use of your volunteering time. This may include encouraging employees to volunteer with organizations on their own, or implementing a volunteer strategy with your company.

Charitable fundraisers, community clean-ups and other special events are great photo opportunities. Long term volunteering situations are also worthy of media attention.

What is Corporate Volunteerism?

A corporate volunteer program is an ongoing, co-ordinated effort through which a company promotes community involvement on the part of employees. It is a basic business strategy for community participation, which goes beyond financial donations. Participation of employees as community volunteers meets a critical community need for time, energy and skills while providing substantial returns to both the employee and the employer.

Who Benefits?

The Employees/Volunteers:

- Develop leadership/decision making abilities
- Achieve personal growth
- Gain opportunities to assist those who are needy
- Learn team building skills
- Balance work life with fun leisure activities
- Increase their sense of worth and personal pride

The Employer:

- Enhances public image
- Achieves high visibility
- Solidifies interest of the community

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Crisis Communications

From Chernobyl to Three Mile Island, most of us are familiar with crisis situations. We can probably list situations that have occurred in our own cities or communities. Preventive measures are the best way to avoid crises, but sometimes they occur unforeseen. Fires, accidents, and environmental damage are only a few of the situations companies are forced to deal with, often with little notice. Even problems on a smaller scale can have a detrimental effect on an organization, its employees, and the community.

Being prepared for a crisis is second best only to avoiding one altogether. No matter what the situation or size of the crisis, a crisis communications plan is vital. Planning may make the difference between success and failure. *Sources HotLink* editor Jean Coburn consulted with Al Czarnecki, a crisis communications specialist. Here is his list on how to prepare for a crisis.

Crisis Communications Readiness Checklist

These ten items should be in place PRIOR to a crisis situation. This is of great help in maintaining poise and being able to concentrate on your top priority, the crisis response plan.

1. **Public relations policy and procedures.** A statement of mandate, values, program, leadership.
2. **Crisis communications action plan.** Key people, roles, action sequences, scenarios.
3. **'Big Picture' information piece on every major program.** This could be your annual report.
4. **'Window' information piece on every major program.** Content and being up-to-date are most important. Can be kept as text files and printed on special letterhead.

5. **Reference files on potential crisis situations.** Indexed and portable minutes, reports, and clippings.
6. **Key persons list.** Work and home phone numbers, one-page job summaries and one-page biographies of board members, senior management, and senior persons at every physical location. Indexed and portable.
7. **Designated spokesperson(s).** Establish default assignments prior to a crisis. Arrange for everyone to have some public speaking experience. These people and your public relations counsel should know each other.
8. **Designated media coordination.** This function should be established as credible and helpful with BOTH your staff and the media prior to a crisis. Trust is an outstanding asset in the midst of mayhem.
9. **Media directory or detailed list. Bowdens, Matthews, or your own contact database.** You should have a concise list of the major media and of your public relations counsel at home with your key spokespeople.
10. **Media contact log.** You can have a dozen or more newspapers and radio and television stations on the go at one time. Keep a separate tracking sheet for every journalist/story. Know who contacted you, when, about what, how to contact them, what their deadline is, what you promised, who you've delegated to, when they're due to get back to you, whether you need to follow up.

Al Czarnecki APR is president of Al Czarnecki Communications (416) 261-9828. You can find more resources relating to public relations and social marketing on his World Wide Web site - <http://www.web.net/~alcom>.

Feedback

Do you have questions or comments about this newsletter, your listing in *Sources*, or any of the services *Sources* provides? Call us at (416) 964-7799 or E-mail us at sources@sources.com.

Who's Missing?

Do you know an organization which would benefit from listing with *Sources*? Please contact *Sources* at (416) 964-7799 or by fax at (416) 964-8763 or by E-mail at sources@sources.com and we'll send them an information package.

Put The Spotlight on Your Listing!

Display advertising can put your organization in the spotlight every time a reader opens *Sources* or visits our Internet site. Cancopy, Deloitte & Touche, The Canadian Chemical Producers' Association and many others use advertisements to direct journalists to their listings and to raise awareness about their specific services like resource materials, hot-lines, media directories or Internet sites. Call Display Advertising Manager Kirsten Cowan at (416) 964-7799 to find out how advertising in *Sources* can work for you!

SOURCES *HotLink*

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Effective Communication

Friendly Faxing

Keep it Simple! Photographs and fancy graphics may look good on your original but they look ugly when they are received on a fax machine. And many machines have trouble even receiving complex faxes.

Avoid fine print! Your flyer may go through many generations of faxing and copying. Details get lost very quickly.

Watch your margins! Different fax machines have different abilities to print close to the sides or bottom of pages. Leave at least a half-inch at the sides and an inch at the bottom to be safe.

Use standard paper size! Every fax machine can receive letter size documents. If your fax is on legal size paper, be aware that many machines

will either truncate it at 11 inches or split it onto two pages.

Avoid Grey! Fax machines don't like grey. They use black and white. Grey is simulated by not printing all the black dots. Not only does this look ugly but it slows down sending the fax dramatically.

Avoid Black! It looks dramatic but it uses a lot of ink or toner when it is printed or copied.

Avoid White! Do you really need to space out the information that much or could it be compressed to fit onto a single page?

Don't Waste Paper! Do you really need to print a separate flyer for each event you sponsor or would a single-page

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Corporate Volunteering... *Continued from Page 1*

- Improves local quality of life
- Increases employee morale
- Instills confidence in business
- Displays a humanistic approach to employee relations

The Community:

- Receives volunteers who have specialized skills/expertise
- Improves social conditions by helping the needy
- Builds a stronger and safer community
- Recipients gain improved quality of living

How Can You Promote Volunteerism Within Your Corporation?

DEVELOP a corporate policy/philosophy statement that is endorsed by top management to demonstrate your support for employees who are active in the community as volunteers.

ASK your employees how they are active in the community and recognize them within the corporation for their efforts.

LINK with charitable organizations in

need of volunteers, and work with your employees to secure meaningful ways of contributing.

HOST a "Volunteer Fair" inviting local agencies to inform your employees about volunteer opportunities.

ENCOURAGE your retirees and pre-retirement personnel to get involved as volunteers. Provide adequate information to help them make choices.

INVITE speakers on volunteerism, publish articles about volunteering in your newsletter, put brochures in payroll packages.

CONSIDER giving employees lieu time for volunteer work where they will be representing your company's commitment to the community.

CONTACT your local volunteer centre. By supporting and encouraging participation by employees, your organization can gain publicity while doing good. Everyone from your organization to the recipient benefits from corporate volunteering.

The volunteer information above was compiled with the help of Volunteer Ontario. If you require more information, call the centre at (416) 236-0588.

Helping Journalists Find You

Make the most of your *Sources* Listing:

By now you should have received your Autumn 1997 *Sources* Listings Renewal or Update package. Maximize the power of your *Sources* listing by reviewing:

Your Contacts

- Your *Sources* listing can include up to fifteen contact names. These names and their co-ordinates are vital because they enable the media to turn to you for information in your area of expertise.
- Whether you currently use one main number in your listing or you have several people on your contact list, make sure the person who answers the phone knows how to handle calls from the media and knows to whom the calls should be transferred.
- Review the skills of the people in your organization and select a diverse range of spokespeople who are experts in specific areas relevant to your listing in *Sources*.
- Besides phone numbers, there are several ways in which you can help the media reach you. Most listings include fax numbers; cellular phone numbers, pager numbers, after-hours telephone numbers and E-mail addresses are sometimes appropriate. Internet sites are also helpful; a direct link can be set up from your *Sources* listing to your own World Wide Web site.
- No matter what combination of coordinates you choose, the media should be able to reach someone at your organization quickly. A contact list that makes it easy for journalists to reach your organization means more interviews and press coverage.

Your Logo

- More than 80% of organizations listed in *Sources* raise their visibility in the print edition and on the SOURCES SELECT Online World Wide Web site by including a logo. We need a good original copy of your logo to be able to reproduce it well (letterhead or PMT). No faxed copies or logos on disk please.

Your Descriptive Paragraph

- Tell the media who you are and what you do. Fifty words are included in your standard rate. A sixty word French-language descriptive paragraph is also worth considering: Tell the French-speaking media you encourage their calls.

Your Subject Headings

- Your subject index headings are the most powerful feature of your listing. Make sure journalists see your name under all *Sources* subject headings relevant to your organization. Your choice of headings *tells* journalists, editors and researchers you have expertise in the subject they are looking up, and *leads* them directly to your company or organization.
- More than 16,000 carefully chosen headings reflecting a wide diversity of topics are available to you in the *Sources* Subject Index. To select or review the headings under which you want journalists to find you, start by going through the Subject Index in your copy of *Sources*. Look for headings which are relevant to your organization, headings that best highlight *your* areas of expertise.
- To help you find the subject headings most appropriate to you, we have developed lists of headings arranged by broad category (e.g. Law, Health, Science and Technology) and by more defined sub-category (e.g. Criminal Law, Dentistry, Computers). We're happy to send you a list of headings in the category which is relevant to you. Just ask.
- Re-check your headings with each edition. Your organization changes, the world changes, and news judgments change.

If you have not yet received your renewal or update package, call Jean Coburn or Greg Roberts at *Sources* (416) 964-7799 to receive a copy.

Your Guide to Public Speaking

SECRETS OF POWER PRESENTATIONS, 6th edition

Peter Urs Bender

The Achievement Group
1991, 242 pp, \$15.95
ISBN 0-9695066-0-0
Orders: 1-800-668-9372

REVIEWED BY JEAN COBURN

Public speaking is said to be the number one fear of adults in the Western world; it ranks worse than death for most of us. In *Secrets of Power Presentations*, Peter Urs Bender teaches readers how to conquer this fear by learning the steps to better communication.

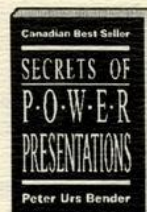
Speech is only one of the many components of communication. People experience messages using all of their senses. *Secrets of Power Presentations* emphasizes five elements of a successful presentation: Speech, body language, equipment, environment and preparation.

Bender does not overwhelm his readers. He raises awareness of all aspects of presenting and, in a reassuring tone, explains how we are all capable of it. The experiences and lessons in the book enable readers to present with confidence, no matter what the occasion. Whether you plan on speaking at staff meetings, board meetings, a town hall or a press conference, *Secrets of Power Presentations* will help you develop your skills.

This book is presented in the same manner presentations should be – as a complete package. Bender shows readers how to break down a presentation and turn it into manageable parts. He then lays out a plan of action, which is both easy to read and interesting. *Secrets of Power Presentations* is punctuated by graphs, quotes, charts, lists, checklists and evaluations, all of which make the book useful as a tool for self-evaluation.

The Secrets of Power Presentations is a no-nonsense guide to public speaking.

See Peter Urs Bender's listing on page 199 of the Summer 1997 issue of *Sources*.



Give Journalists a Daily Reminder!

Sources cooperates with the Canadian Association of Journalists to produce *The Canadian Journalists' Calendar*, distributed to CAJ's membership. This popular calendar, featuring 13 of the best photographs taken by Canadian photojournalists, includes deadlines and events important to media professionals. If your organization wishes to raise its profile with the media, sponsors a public awareness month or week or hosts a conference or series of events you want journalists to know about, advertising in *The Canadian Journalists' Calendar* is for you! Call *Sources* Display Advertising Manager Kirsten Cowan at (416) 964-7799 for details today!

Expose Yourself!

Have you written an article on a topic relevant to the readers of *The Sources HotLink*? Send your reviews, tips sheets or guides to us for possible inclusion in an upcoming issue.

Please contact *Sources* at (416) 964-7799 or by fax at (416) 964-8763 or by E-mail at sources@sources.com.

Share the Good News

Has your organization generated media coverage recently? Share the details and a copy of the story the next time you're in the news.

Fax: (416) 964-8763, mail: *Sources*, 4 Phipps Street, Suite 109, Toronto, Ontario M4Y 1J5, E-mail: sources@sources.com.

Public Relations Resources –

PR World Wide Web Sites

The overwhelming quantity of information on the Internet is often a deterrent for people who do not have time to waste "surfing the Net." The following World Wide Web sites will enable you to minimize searching and directly access sites that are of interest to people in public relations.

- <http://www.cprs.ca> – Vital to anyone wishing to find out more about the Canadian Public Relations Society. It lists awards, accreditation, programs, special events, resources, chapter locations, and links to other public relations sites.
- <http://www.iabc.com> – The International Association of Business Communicators' useful resource and networking site for people involved in employee communications, marketing communications, public affairs or public relations.
- <http://www.usprnet.com> – The National Public Relations Network features a directory of more than 2,500 public relations agencies. Information and articles on relevant public relations issues, such as speech writing and trade shows, are also listed on this U.S. site.
- <http://www.ragan.com> – For those wishing to learn more about technical communications, this site offers reports on a wide array of means such as video, online resources, Internet,

Intranet, CD ROMs and news bulletins.

- <http://www.crtc.gc.ca> – Current news, archives and social issues are some of the topics relating to public relations on the CRTC's site.
- <http://www.eycan.com> – Ernst & Young's WWW site contains a wealth of financial information. Its articles, ideas, question and answers, and links are especially valuable. Media contact information may be of particular interest to people specializing in public relations.
- <http://www.newswire.ca> – This site offers press releases, government sites and survey results. To find information on public relations in Canada, start a search based on organization, date or keywords. Or find information and links to American public relations sites at <http://www.prnewswire.com>
- <http://www.sources.com> – Experts on all aspects of public relations can be found in the *Sources* directory. The Links and Resources section of *SOURCES SELECT Online* features links to public relations, media, and journalism sites.

Have you come across any Internet sites that would be valuable to the readers of *The Sources HotLink*? Call Jean at (416) 964-7799 or E-mail the URLs to jeanc@sources.com.

Friendly Faxing... Continued from Page 2

calendar do? Remember, a calendar can give people greater notice and they are more likely to be willing to accept a single page coming every now and again. Also, a single page is more likely to be copied and posted.

Let them know in time! Give people at least a week's notice where possible. It may take several days just for your flyer to get out to everyone. If the recipient gets it and posts it a day or two before your event, few people will see it. Most people receive faxes at their workplace so you also have to make sure it can get to them before they leave for the weekend!

Let them know who you are! And include a contact number on your flyer in case people have questions.

Keep it clear! Send the original to FaxLeft in as high a resolution as your fax machine can handle - or send it via E-mail if you created it on a computer. And avoid sending flyers on coloured paper if you can. Some fax machines are a lot better than others at filtering out the background.

Keep your equipment maintained! Some fax machines leave streaks and lines on the faxes they send.

Keep it stocked! It doesn't receive faxes

when the paper or ink supply is out.

Keep it running! Faxes are sent at all times of day and night. Retrying sends takes time. Resubmitting failed faxes takes time also. Keep your fax machine turned on.

FaxLeft is the Greater Toronto Area's largest and most progressive public service fax network. Operating for community, recreation, arts, environmental, labour and social justice groups, FaxLeft provides a quick and effective means of distributing information about events and issues. Visit FaxLeft's World Wide Web site at <http://www.echo-on.net/~faxleft>.