

The Sources *HotLink*

Tips and Practical Ideas to Get Positive News Coverage

Number Two, Winter 1997



Greetings (and Tips) from the Editor

May 1997 be a good year for you. It's the 20th anniversary year of *Sources*. In July the Summer print edition will celebrate two decades of *Sources* helping organizations like yours tell their stories to and through the Canadian media. Whether or not your organization is having an anniversary, I invite you to benefit from *Sources* 20th Anniversary activities, special features and promotions.

The *Sources* World Wide Web site at <http://www.sources.com> is well into its second year, providing many organizations with their first Internet presence. Those who have chosen to hotlink their sites to the *Sources* site benefit from even more vital exposure. If you have a WWW site you should do everything you can to advertise and promote its existence and features. For more advice on improving your World Wide Web presence read Greg Roberts' article on page 4.

Welcome to the 174 organizations who have just joined *Sources*. Look for them in the Winter 1997 edition and on the WWW site. And do let us know of organizations which would benefit from improved media coverage and therefore should be listed with *Sources*.

Take advantage yourself of the information and resources that organizations listed in *Sources* provide. See the articles by Carol Levine of Communications Meca and Sabine Steinbrecher of Vorg Incorporated in this edition of *HotLink*. Do you have an article idea or would you like to submit a list of tips for getting positive media coverage? Call me at (416) 964-7799 or by E-mail at yvonne@sources.com. I also welcome comments about anything we've printed here.

Best wishes for 1997 and good luck with your media relations strategy!

Cheers

Yvonne Hilder, Editor

Tips for Appropriate Speeches

BY CAROL LEVINE

Several years ago, my father, who was 79 at the time, asked if I would talk about public relations to his senior citizens club. In preparing my presentation I worried about whether I could hold their interest or impart information that would have the least bit of relevance. Surprisingly, very few fell asleep, my father couldn't have been more proud and I experienced greater satisfaction than I do in most of my public speaking engagements to business and professional groups. Here are some tips for improving the power of your presentations:

1. Get close to your market. It's fine to use a presentation more than once, but adapt it to your audience. Use examples they can relate to.
2. Ask one or two questions. Nothing is more boring than a talking head. If you can interact with your audience, chances are they will stay alert.
3. Be spontaneous, particularly if you are working from a prepared text. If you know people in the audience, try to refer to them by name. If you are aware of a specific opinion or issue that is important to them try to bring it forward.
4. Be prepared for the toughest questions. Presumably you're an expert in your field. Showcasing your talent means being prepared for unexpected zingers.
5. Know the mindset of your audience. Nothing can turn an audience off

more than inappropriate gestures or comments. Whether talking to an "old boys club" or a group of militant feminists you will want to tailor your message to achieve the desired result without being offensive.

6. Practice your physical moves. Speaking is like acting and the podium is your stage so you will need to feel comfortable moving around it. Never turn your back on your audience, even when writing on a flip chart or pointing to a screen. Learn to walk backwards.
7. Emphasize your key points with flair. When you have something profound to say (and when you are asking a question) extend your arm forward, halfway between your waist and head. When your statement is finished draw your arm back.



Carol Levine, APR, is co-founder of Communications Meca, a full-service public relations consultancy based in Montreal. Carol speaks frequently on public relations and marketing communications

issues to business and professional groups and is a regular presenter at The Business World Exposition on behalf of the Montreal Gazette. The Communications Meca listing is on page 226 of the Winter 1997 Sources. Her E-mail address is clevine@meca.ca.

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: 4 Phipp St., Ste. 109, Toronto, ON M4Y 1J5, E-mail: sources@sources.com.

Circulation News

A few of those recently added, at their request, to the *Sources* controlled distribution list:

Victoria Terry, Story Editor, *CTV News*, Ottawa

Janice Neal, Bureau Chief, *Studio 2, TVOntario*, Toronto

Yafang Shi, Reporter, *Mingpao Daily News*, Scarborough

Gabrielle Veto, Reporter, *U TV, CanWest Global*, Vancouver

Tara Gibson, *Mirror-Examiner*, Middleton

Oscar Trim, Publisher, *Christian Journal*, Lasalle

Michael Hayes, Journalist, *Rogers Radio, CFHC*, Canmore

Kevin Rollason, Reporter, *Winnipeg Free Press*, Winnipeg

The Life Network

Brenda Thompson, Editor, *Chatelaine*

Glenda-Lee Allan, Farm Broadcaster, *Golden West Broadcasting Radio*, Swift Current

Lisa Brandt, Morning Co-Host, *CHML 900*, Hamilton

The Camilla Scott Show

— From Circulation Manager Kate MacDougall.

SOURCES **HotLink**

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Successful Event Marketing Strategies

BY SABINE STEINBRECHER

Is your organization planning an event? Here are tips to help make it successful:

1. Know Your Market. Design a demographic profile of your target audience; age, income, gender, geographic target, etc.
2. Prepare a Market/Media Match. Which newspapers, newsletters, radio or television stations relate to your target market and in what ways?
3. Prepare a Marketing Budget. Can you afford to advertise? Can you afford not to? How much free P.R. can you achieve?
4. Prepare a Market/Media/Money Match. By this point, you will have a very comprehensive marketing research document from which you can design a targeted campaign.
5. Prepare a simple news release. One of the most effective methods of cultivating public relations, media exposure and certainly the most cost effective as well. A campaign missing this component is considerably less valuable.
6. Make the organizer, the keynote speaker and/or the main attraction available to speak to the media. The unique nature of any event implies
7. Invite media to attend as your guest. This is particularly important for after-event marketing or even for next-event marketing if you are well enough organized to present the information.
8. Develop a "What's On" listing. Many, many media sources have free community or "What's Happening" listings. Keep a current list, preferably in fax broadcast format.
9. Consider Direct Mail Marketing. Lists, mail drops, inserts, etc., can be very effective.
10. Make effective use of 21st Century technology techniques. Utilize fax broadcasting, Website advertising, Internet advertising and telemarketing to aid in additional marketing, follow-up, registration, or confirmation.

Sabine Steinbrecher is the President of Vorg Inc. Vorg is Canada's largest financial speakers bureau, an event management and marketing firm dedicated to the financial services industry. The Vorg listing is on page 315 of the Winter 1997 edition of Sources. Sabine can be reached at (416) 703-VORG or 1-800-694-VORG.

Letter to the Editor

Dear Ms. Hilder,

We have just received our copy of *The Sources HotLink* – Great!! The information is wonderful and very helpful. I would like to share some of this information with our people if possible. We are a non-profit organization and many of us do not have access to these important aids.

If you will grant us permission to use some of the articles we will of course give you the credit. Looking forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Mary Berney, Co-President
Birthright International

If you'd like to use any of the information in HotLink just drop me a line and let me know which articles you'd like to reprint. – YH

Important News

**You're Registered!
Note your Password!**

An important step in the evolution of the *Sources* World Wide Web site is an all-registration structure. Organizations listed with *Sources* are automatically provided with a registered-user password. Your password is printed on the mailing label of your Winter 1997 print edition. To register simply dial up <http://www.sources.com> and register using your new password. You can change your password after you have registered.

Call Kate MacDougall or Greg Roberts at the *Sources* office at (416) 964-7799 if you have questions.

Getting the most from Sources

Contacts: Connecting directly with Canadian journalists

BY YVONNE HILDER

HotLink Number One featured an article by Ulli Diemer about subject headings, the key feature of your Sources listing. Part two of the series focuses on another important component of your Sources listing: the contacts.

Contacts are the people you've selected to respond to journalists. Many organizations funnel media calls to their public relations departments. Others select contacts possessing expertise or choose contacts from each province. Some organizations include only their main phone and fax numbers. Decide what is most appropriate for your organization.

Generally you'll get more for your media relations dollar by including as many contacts as appropriate. A generous 15 contacts, each with full co-ordinates, are available with your basic listing price. After 15, a modest fee of \$25 per contact applies.

A contact can simply be a name and phone number. We recommend: **name, title, mailing address, phone number, fax, E-mail, an after-hours number and cellular phone number.** *The more*

communication options you provide the more your Sources listing will appeal to journalists.

Canada has five time zones. Additionally, the media often call after regular business hours. The easier you are to reach the more likely they are to quote you. Respond as promptly as possible to media calls. If you've listed your E-mail address check it at least daily.

Ensure all your contacts in Sources are at least aware of, and preferably briefed about, handling calls from journalists. Review internal policies for handling media calls. The article below about interviews should be helpful.

Monitor your media relations activity. A person in your organization should be given responsibility for keeping track of media coverage. You may be getting more calls than you realize. Each is an opportunity to get your message heard. And clippings and broadcast mentions can be valuable promotional tools.

For more tips about increasing the power of your Sources listing call me at (416) 964-7799 or E-mail me at yvonne@sources.com.



Print Excellence

Sources is now the sponsor of the Canadian Public Relations Society (Toronto) 1997 Print Award of Excellence. For information about this and other awards call Sheryl Lavine, APR at (416) 932-1555. Or contact The Canadian Public Relations Society (Toronto) at One Yonge St., Ste. 1801, Toronto, M5E 1W7, phone: (416) 360-1988, for an entry form and complete details.

Calendar

The Canadian Journalists' Calendar 1997



from Sources and
The Canadian Association of Journalists

Sources is pleased to announce new ventures in co-operation with the Canadian Association of Journalists. One product of this relationship landed on the desks of thousands of CAJ members and Sources recipients in January: *The Canadian Journalists' Calendar*, featuring photos by members of CAJ's Photojournalism Caucus, produced and sponsored by Sources.

Sources HotTip

Getting the Most from Interviews

BY YVONNE HILDER

Recently an excellent article about corporate media relations appeared in the *Globe and Mail*. The article featured media trainer Jim Gray, a senior consultant with *Media Profile*, a public relations firm which helps organizations get the most from contact with the media. Jim formerly worked for the *The Halifax Chronicle Herald*, *The Toronto Star* and the *CBC*.

I asked Jim what he'd done to achieve such positive coverage. Did *Media Profile* have tips to share with our readers? They did, and here they are:

Prepare Your Messages. Determine what your three or four key messages will be before the interview and deliver

them, even if the 'right' questions aren't asked.

Know Your Audience. You're speaking to the public and your employees through the journalist.

Stay Focused. Answer the questions asked of you, but use each answer as a way to market one of your key messages.

Correct Bias. If a question contains false or biased information, calmly correct the journalist before answering.

Stick To The Facts. Don't speculate. If you don't know the answer to a question, say so. Then quickly get back to the reporter with the needed information.

Empathize. Respond to emotionally loaded questions with sensitivity. Show concern for the misfortune of others.

Be Careful. There's no such thing as

"off the record." If you don't want something to be printed or aired, don't say it. Be on guard at all times.

Think Ahead. Consider the questions you'll likely be asked. Rehearse your responses. Practice your key messages.

Show Confidence. You're the expert. You should look, act and sound it. But don't overdo it. Don't be arrogant.

Be Professional. Treat every reporter with courtesy and respect.

Be Responsive. Be open and honest. Return all media calls promptly. Keep in mind that an interview with a journalist is an important sales opportunity. Take advantage of it.

Jim Gray can be reached at Media Profile: (416) 504-8464.

The Sources HotLink — Winter 1997 Phone: (416) 964-7799

News Release Tips

BY BARRIE ZWICKER

Before you send out your next news release review the following:

1. Make sure it's important enough. One or two "ho-hum" news releases are like crying wolf. If you get a reputation for sending out releases when they aren't warranted, you may end up being ignored when your organization has something really important to tell the world.
2. Make it short, preferably one page.
3. Include the Five W's: who, what, when, where, why. If you have useful background material, send it as an attachment.
4. Use clear ordinary language.
5. Be sure to include the name or names of people in your organization who can be reached before and after office hours in case of questions. List business and home phone numbers. One unanswered phone can "turn off" a reporter on a bad day.
6. Consider how and when to release your information. Keep deadlines in mind. You could release your information – if it's important enough – on a riverbank (pollution story), courthouse steps (legal case) or at the home of your president.

Barrie Zwicker is Publisher of Sources and Parliamentary Names & Numbers and a Segment Producer specializing in media criticism and the Internet on VISION TV's daily human affairs program Skylight. He can be reached at 416-964-7799 or at 416-651-5588 (home/writing studio).

Sources HotTip

Five Common World Wide Web Site Failings

BY GREG ROBERTS

As Technical Co-ordinator for *Sources* and Editor of *Parliamentary Names & Numbers* I devote a large amount of time to researching on the World Wide Web. Here are five common mistakes I see on WWW sites and what you can do to avoid them.

1. **Too Many/Large Images.** Think of the users. Many are using 14.4 or 28.8 modems. A page with large or many graphic images can take forever to download. That's okay for an online art gallery, but for an information site it's the kiss of death. Keep images to a minimum, or provide a high-graphics and low-graphics version.

I suggest keeping heavy graphics off the main page altogether. A well-designed Web page will have a text equivalent of each graphic. This is particularly useful for the increasing number of serious Web users navigating the Web with the images turned off.

2. **Frames.** I don't like them and never will. They often mess up the navigating with the forward and back buttons. A site with frames results in a small main window where I can barely see the information. And information is why I'm visiting the site. A well-designed site should have a menu bar on the top or sides, indicated by colour or shading so it stands out. Some people like frames, but if they're used on your site provide a no-frame version as well.

3. **Bad Structure.** I visit many sites where the only way to get from a particular section to another desired section, is to back up to the main page and then select the desired section. This is bad structural design, and is unfortunately very common. You should be able to navigate easily around a site. From any page on your site, make it possible to select any other section, or the main page, as well as the information in that specific section.

4. **Browser-Specific Sites.** A disturbing trend in sites recently is designing specifically for either *Netscape Navigator* or *Microsoft Explorer*, the two main Web browsers. Sites that are designed for one browser's specific capabilities can look very strange when viewed with the other browser. A few very inhospitable sites don't even allow you visit them if you aren't browsing with *Explorer*. Give your site a common design, or provide two versions of the site, one for *Netscape Navigator* and another for *Microsoft Explorer*.

5. **Uninspired Design.** Too many sites I visit while researching *Parliamentary Names & Numbers* are, to me, boring. Use interesting backgrounds, menu bars, and colours. Nevertheless, I'll take boring and fast to load over beautiful but glacially slow any time. But speed and grace can be combined.

We welcome your suggestions for improving the *Sources* World Wide Web site at <http://www.sources.com>

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