



# MEDIA RELATIONS GUIDE

## Textile Recovery Initiative

### Planning Considerations

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- **Timing:** When planning an event that you hope to secure media coverage of, consider media deadlines and broadcasts. The best news days for onsite media will likely be Wednesday through Friday between 10:30 a.m. and 2 p.m. Saturday events are fine as well, but newsrooms are typically understaffed on the weekends.
- Think like a journalist when planning your event. Both print and broadcast media alike incorporate visuals as much as words into their stories. Create photo opportunities with activities and action shots.
- The bigger, the better. Plan your event with other institutions. For example:
  - Coordinate with a school PTA to host a recycling education event in conjunction with the collection.
  - Host an event at a local solid waste facility to promote the diversion of clothing and textiles from landfills and incinerators.
  - Bring together nonprofit and for-profit organizations involved in the textile recycling process to present a unified message on how both entities keep textiles out of the waste stream.

### Build Your Media Contact List

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- Compile a list of your local media outlets including print (newspapers and magazines), broadcast (television and radio), and digital (blogs and community news sites).
- Use online resources to find the appropriate contact's email and phone number.
  - Print: Identify the managing editor or find a general news inquiry email.
  - Broadcast: Find the phone number and email to the newsroom or assignment desk.
  - Digital: Identify the editor or general news inquiry email. Create an account to contribute to community news sites.

### Announce the Event

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- **Timing:** Send the advisory to contacts 7 to 10 days in advance of the event. The best days to send media advisories and press releases are Tuesday through Thursday between 8 and 9:30 a.m.
- Send the event media advisory via email to your list of media contacts—editors, producers, bloggers, newsrooms and assignment desks.



- Make sure to paste the advisory directly into the body of the email; don't attach a document. Include the appropriate logos and branding.
- Post the news on community driven sites such as Patch and Wicked Local.

## Media Pitching

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- Prepare your elevator pitch before making calls. Use the provided "Talking Points" and elements of newsworthiness below to craft a quick, concise pitch.
- **Timing:** Begin follow up media pitching 1 to 2 days after sending the first announcement. Continued media follow up should be conducted until the very day of the event.
- **First Round:** The best way to get in front of a member of the media is typically via phone. Journalists received hundreds to thousands of emails each day with story pitches. Your job is to make your headline stands out amongst the rest.
  - **Print and digital:** Call the managing editor or appropriate journalist/blogger to pitch the importance of the event and initiative as a whole. If you get a voice mail, leave a message and follow up with an email right after.
  - **Broadcast:** Call the assignment desk (television) to see if the event was added to their assignment calendar. If not, remind them of the event date, time and purpose, while also pitching the importance and newsworthiness (See talking points). Also offer to resend the release and confirm the correct email address.
- **Second Round:** This process (email, phone, etc.) should continue every couple days until you feel you have successfully gotten their attention and secured their coverage or received a decline in interest.
- **Last Round:** Television outlets typically do not make their assignment decisions until the day of an event. Be sure to call the assignment desk one day prior to the event to make sure it is still on their calendar. Try to get a feel for whether or not they will send a report or photog (videographer). If you do not receive a solid yes or no the day before, call the morning of the event as well.
- **Remember:** Reporters are human too. Be cognizant of their busy schedules. Be concise and persuasive in your pitch, but remain casual. Use this as an opportunity to build a relationship.



## Onsite Management

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- Designate one person the official media contact and coordinator for the event. This person's name and contact information should be on all media announcements.
- This person is not necessarily the spokesperson, but should:
  - Greet members of the media as they arrive to the event and offer any assistance they might need in order to effectively tell the story.
  - Coordinate interviews with the event spokesperson.
  - Point out relevant activities that the photog will want to film.
  - Ask for an idea of when the article will run or segment might broadcast (when they are done filming).

## Post Event

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- Immediately following the event, use the news release template to announce results. Include one to three photos. Conduct follow up pitching and submit to community news sites.
- Monitor the news to pull and watch secured coverage. Share any media coverage on social media and other digital channels (website, newsletters, etc.).

## Additional Tips

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- Return all phone calls and emails from the media promptly. Work on their deadlines.
- Make covering your event as easy and seamless as possible for the media.
- Remember that breaking news may pull coverage away from your event. Don't be disappointed if reporters do not attend. Use the follow-up release to secure post-event coverage.
- Never thank a journalist for covering your story—you are implying they did you a favor, which is the wrong approach. Instead, compliment them on a great article or segment.



# ELEMENTS OF NEWSWORTHINESS

## Textile Recovery Initiative

### Timeliness

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The newer the better. Current news has more impact than something that happened yesterday, a week or a month ago. The media loses interest in past events because there is always fresh news. Capitalize on an event by pitching prior and immediately following it.

### Proximity

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Location, location, location. People are more interested in news that is nearby. This is important when choosing which media outlets to target and pitch to.

### Prominence

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A well-known person, place or event has a stronger news angle than something the audience isn't familiar with.

### Consequence

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Does the story directly affect readers or viewers? If so, the media will want to know how and why.

### Novelty

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Something unusual, shocking or bizarre can be newsworthy on its own.

### Conflict

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Topics of arguments, rivalries and disagreements are typically of news interest. It is human nature to advocate for a side. Stories that involve conflict include those about religion, sports, business, trials, wars, human rights, politics, environment, etc.

### Human Interest

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Any story that draws upon an emotional reaction. These stories could be feel good moments, inspiring comebacks or successes, or infuriating findings.

### Impact

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The more people involved in the event, the more newsworthy it is. The more people impacted by it will also affect its newsworthiness.