Media Madness

What you need to know about getting covered in the changing media landscape

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Why should you listen?

• Nearly 20 years in professional journalism and media relations
  – 13 in media relations
    • web, social media, marketing, crisis/issue communication and management
  – 5 years in newspapers
    • health care, education (higher ed & k-12), economic development, city/county government, general assignment
  – editorial intern/assistant, Southern Living
  – student journalist, USA and UAB
Media: Who are they?

- Newspapers
- Magazines
- Web sites
- Bloggers
- Social Media
- TV
- Radio
State of the Media

• Pew Research Center State of the News Media 2013 (http://stateofthemedia.org/)
  – Undermanned
    • Unprepared to uncover stories, dig deep into emerging ones or to question information
  – Public opinion
    • 31% have deserted a news outlet
State of the Media

• Evidence in the numbers
  – Newsroom cutbacks
    • down 30% since 2000 and
    • below 40,000 full-time professional employees
    • sports, weather and traffic now account on average for 40% of local TV news content
    • CNN has cut its number of story packages nearly in half since 2007
State of the Media

• Cable coverage of live events and live reports which require a crew and correspondent, has fallen 30% since 2007 to 2012
• Interview segments, which take fewer resources are up 31%.
• Time magazine, the only major print news weekly left, cut roughly 5% of its staff in early 2013
• Media outlets now use technology companies to aggregate others’ content by way of algorithm, no human reporting necessary.
Where are people getting news?

• Social Media (Facebook, Twitter, blogs, etc.)
  – 19% of Americans saw news or news headlines on a social network in the past 24 hours
  – 34% of those aged 18 to 24, and 30% of 30-to-39-year-olds, said they saw news on a social networking site in the past 24 hours

• Mobile is driving much of this growth
  – 47% of smartphone users said they got news through a social network “sometimes” or “regularly.”
  – 39% of tablet news users report the same
Social by the numbers

• Major news websites in the U.S. get 9% of their traffic from Facebook
• Social media drives between 7 and 10 percent of the traffic to WSJ.com
• Facebook, with 167 million active users in the U.S., is the most important of the social media sites for sharing news.
• Twitter, with 59 million active U.S. users, has consolidated its reputation as the place readers and journalists alike go for the latest updates on breaking news
Social by the Numbers

- 45% of Twitter news consumers are 18-29 years old.
- Facebook news consumers - 34% are 18-29 years old.
- 2% of Twitter news consumers are 65 or older, compared with 18% of the total population and 7% of Facebook news consumers.
Impact of word of mouth

• Hearing news from friends and family, via social media or word of mouth, leads to deeper news consumption.
  – For 72% of adults the most common way to get news from friends and family is by having someone talk to them—either in person or over the phone.
  – 63% of those people will seek out a news story about that event or issue.

• Social networking is now a part of this process
  – 15% of U.S. adults get most of their news from friends and family this way
  – 77% of these follow links to full news stories.
What does this all mean for the SON?

• We are in the drivers seat
  – News is no longer a product, it’s a service.
    • Journalists help consumers find the information they are looking for, make sense of it, react to it, and use it.
  – News organizations and news Web sites are no longer final destinations.
    • Gateways to helping people find what they want on the rest of the site or the Web.
Opportunities

• Journalists need more help finding stories now more than ever before.
• Journalists are looking for easy stories that matter to readers, but don’t require a lot of time to produce.
• Consolidation is forcing more shared content and repurposed content.
If you want something covered...

• Visual, visual, visual
  – Action photos
  – Grip & grins, group, vacation-looking posed shots don’t cut it
More good news

• Readers seeking out their own news
  – Use our own vehicles to tell our stories
    • More in depth
    • Less constraints
    • Guaranteed correct
    • Fit our agenda
    • Students, faculty, staff, alumni, donors
  – Google News crawls UAB News site
    • Aggregators for national sites pick up
Working with the media
Why bother?

Media Efforts . . .
- Influence reputation
- Support fundraising
- Support student recruitment
- Build awareness/branding
- Educate the public
- Report on use of public funding
- Please your boss
What’s news to them?

- Research Findings
- Large grant award
- Interesting clinical trial
- Expert comment
- Local look at national trends
- Innovative classes and programs
What do they not cover? (in most cases)

- Check signings
- Ribbon cuttings
- Meetings
- Speakers
- Cocktail parties
- Anniversaries
- Open houses

* These events are covered internally in the magazine, in social media, on the web site and in newsletters
We cover it all with our vehicles
What to do when you have a story idea

• Call or email me – Jennifer Lollar, 4-3888 or jpark@uab.edu
  – Faculty/staff list serve – I get info there

• UAB Media Relations – Tyler Greer, 4-2041 or tgreer@uab.edu
  – If he calls/emails you, get back with him immediately
  – Do not need my permission – we communicate
Newspapers, magazines, web

• Often longer, more detailed interview.
• Reporters often better prepared/specialized.
• Conducted by phone, e-mail or in person.
• Relaxed deadline. Sometimes.
Television

• Needs short, simple answers.
• Visuals are crucial.
• Deadline is now. Or earlier.
• Always on camera.
• Interviewers are rarely specialized.
Radio

– Newscast or talk show?
– Phone or studio
– Listen first... who are these guys and what's their agenda?
What reporters need from you

• An expert source (you)
• A real person(s) dealing with the issue
• Visuals (photos, video, charts, graphics.)
• A timely response
Your rights when dealing with reporters

- To know who is interviewing you
- To know the topic
- To know why the reporter wants you
- To know who else in being interviewed
- To have time to prepare
- To be treated with courtesy
- To be allowed to answer completely
- To correct a misstatement
- To use notes – key words, stats, etc.
- To stop the interview if you have to
- To decline the interview
What to do when media call

• Option A: Tell them to call Tyler Greer with UAB Media Relations, 205-934-2041.

• Option B: Get the details...who are they, what do they want, why are they on this story? Tell them you can’t speak now, but will call back. Then, call Tyler at UAB Media Relations and let him do the groundwork.
Interviews

• Don’t respond to hearsay or gossip
• Stay calm – relax, pause, think
• Never argue or evade
• If you don’t know, say so
• Keep answers positive
• Do not engage in personal chit-chat
• Don’t say “no comment”
Don’t fall for an old Mike Wallace trick

“And you often pause after their answers?”

“That’s right. They get embarrassed by the silence and they begin to fill the silence. Suddenly they begin to really talk.”

Time magazine, Oct. 31, 2005
How to say ‘no comment’ without saying it

• I don’t have that information because...
• I don’t know X, but I can tell you Y...
• I am not the appropriate person to comment on behalf of UAB, but...
• It is our policy not to discuss...
• It would be inappropriate for me to share...
• The information you’re asking for is proprietary...
What you need to remember about reporters

• Might be friendly, but are not your friends

• Always a reporter
  – Never say anything you don’t want to hear on air or read in the newspaper.

• They need you, just as you need them
NOTHING IS EVER OFF THE RECORD!

• Reporters cannot be trusted
• They want to be promoted
• Just don’t say it

NOTHING IS EVER “OFF THE RECORD”!

UAB SCHOOL OF NURSING
Knowledge that will change your world
What not to ask reporters

• Never ask a reporter if you can review the article before it’s published (you can’t, it’s a tenant of journalism) — but you can offer to review your portions for factual accuracy

• You can ask the reporter:
  – To repeat questions
  – To read your quote back to you
  – To call you back if they want to check facts – be available and offer alternate contact info
When something goes wrong

- If misquoted, first weigh the seriousness of the mistake
- Call Jennifer
- Call Tyler at UAB Media Relations
“Never get into an argument with anyone who buys ink by the barrel.”
- Mark Twain