Making Use of the Media in Advocacy and Lobbying

Jo Coghlan, Dr
Making use of the media in advocacy and lobbying

SCU Gold Coast 2016 Community Seminar Series

Recharging your advocacy batteries

Thursday 26 May 2016
Welcome from Professor Mark Hughes, Southern Cross University

Panel One 4:00 to 5:00 | Media: What makes a good news story?

Introductions by Sylvia Roylance, Community Development Officer, Tweed Shire Council

Generating media and social media interest

Speaker | Jo Coghlan, Southern Cross University.
Jo Coghlan is a lecturer in politics and social policy at Southern Cross University. Prior to her academic career, Jo was a policy and media adviser in the Keating Government (1993-1996) and was a lobbyist for small not-for-profit health organisations.

Harnessing resources for media interviews: What do print and radio journalist look for in a good story? What do they need?

Speaker | Andrew Potts, Political Reporter, Gold Coast Bulletin
Andrew Potts is a political journalist and Council reporter for The Gold Coast Bulletin and its affiliated Gold Coast Sun. As a front line journalist his daily job is finding and reporting news and has extensive knowledge about what makes a good news-feature story.

Speaker | Loretta Ryan, Radio Journalist
Loretta Ryan has 30 years-experience in the media industry as a news reporter and acting news director for Stereo Ten, Triple M, 4BH mornings and afternoons. Loretta has also worked as a television news presenter in Brisbane. As a radio journalist, Loretta understands the fast past immediate news environment that is national and regional radio.

Riding the media wave: Building and Beyond – A 15 year campaign for social justice

Speaker | Kay Danes (OAM) International Humanitarian
Kay Danes was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) in 2014 for her service to the international community in human rights and social justice. Kay has given evidence to the US Congress on human rights abuses in Southeast Asia including her own unlawful imprisonment and torture in Laos in 2000-2001. A human rights activist for a number of international human rights issues including gender equality in Afghanistan, and as an active member of The Innocence Project and Political Prisoners Abroad, Kay continues to advocate for those without a voice. Her media and networking strategies means she is a sought after commentator on national and international human rights issues. Kay is the author of five books and is currently completing a PhD in international humanitarianism.

**Panel Two 5:00 to 6:00 | Roundtable: Media Strategies**

*Discussion led by Sylvia Roylance*

**Coffee and Networking 6:00 to 6:20**

**Panel Three 6:20 to 6:45 | Are you media ready? Q and A with Andrew Potts, Loretta Ryan, Sylvia Roylance and Kay Danes**

*Discussion led by Jo Coghlan*

6:45 | Thanks to speakers and participants from Professor Hughes

The 24/7 news cycle has changed the media landscape. This is a positive for organisations that have a human story to tell. Journalists need to fill airtime and print columns with fresh and relevant content.

The advantage of social justice based advocacy is that our clients are our strength. Governments have policy, corporations have profit, you have people – your clients that can tell stories that the public can relate to.

News always has a human impact. Journalists, especially local/regional journalists want to tell the human story to the community in which they live and work.

Knowing how the media works in four ways **Fast Burn News – Slow Burn News – Future Planning News – and Essential Media** helps us to think about ways to generate media interest.
Fast Burn News

News in this space is fast moving. Generating media interest here requires an immediate response.

The News Story – Human Impact

- National economic data > unemployment rates, interest rates
- State and federal budgets > funding cuts
- Elections > advocating a different view
- Policy announcements > changes
- Corporate activity > social benefit

Strategy

Media Release

Local relevance

Research – data

Human impact: The personal story

Direct media contact

Contact executive producers (radio)

Contact print journalists

Social media

Short response - 140 characters

Visual response – the person

Reactive response – commenting

Active response – doing – build an event, petition
Slow Burn News

Features

A feature story is developed over a longer time period, though it may still be only a few days. It is a human interest or personal story, family or community experiences, successes or triumph over adversity. The core of the story is a personal experience that readers/listeners can relate to.

Strategy

Media driven: Are you media contacts looking for people to tell this story?

Organisation driven: Is this a story you can sell a journalist?

Opinion pieces

Opinion pieces – research based evidence, policy changes, historically shifts, more analytical. Still need relevance but take a particular perspective different from others.

Strategy

Immediate for high turnover social media – The Drum, The Conversation, On Line Opinion

Short-term: Australia Policy Online (weekly)
Future planning News

How can future events, days, themes likely to be in the news be planned in advance for media coverage?

Need to be creative and think laterally about your sector and its space in the community.

You are a health-based organisation, advocating for rehabilitation drug services, what health events are likely to be in the media in the future.

National Nurses Day

**POSITIVE** Congratulate nurses working on the frontline of drug related health problems presenting in emergency departments.

**ADVOCATE** for more funding for rehabilitation clinics, education etc to take pressure off nurses and the hospital sector. Make it government (local, state, federal) specific. Call on your local MP to take up the challenge, make representations to the relevant ministers.

Use **RESEARCH** to make your case - $ spent on prevention versus $ spent on treatment

**PERSONALISE** your evidence for prevention with a **SUCCESS STORY**

National Crime Victim’s Right Week

**POSITIVE** Congratulate police, community workers, legal aid services, emergency services in your community.

**ADVOCATE** for more attention on the impact of crime caused by illicit drugs

Use **RESEARCH** to show increased drug use + decline in funding for rehabilitation services = increased crime and victims of crime or funded rehabilitation means crime to fund drug habits decreases = less victims of crime.

**PERSONALISE** your evidence for increased funding with a **TRIUMPH OVER ADVERSITY**. One client was engaged in crime to fund their drug habit, now rehabilitated they are no longer committing crime, hence less victims of crime.
Essential Media

Know your local media
Journalists (print) and Executive Producers (radio) names, phone numbers, portfolios

Let them know about your organisation and its local relevance
Network your organisation: history, issues, key people

Let them know you are an expert
Front line service
Research based evidence
Personal experiences
Successes and failures of policy

Let them know about you
Issues you can comment on, phone numbers of spokespeople (BH and AH, mobiles)
Be available and understand journalist deadlines.
When you commit to a media comment, follow through and follow up

Brand Social Impact
Strength of social justice media:
You can highlight the human experience or human impact of policy
You can highlight human success, overcoming tragedy, good outcomes
Governments have policy, corporations have profit, you have people – your clients that can tell stories that the public can relate to

Media Releases
Have a template ready to go for print, radio and television journalists

Respond, Reactive, Activate
Traditional media: Media release, phone call

Social media: immediate response to news, reaction to announcements (positive and negative), activate a response - an online poll, online petition, a social media campaign to contact politicians.

Plan Features Plan Futures

A quarterly outcome – one feature one future every three months

Planning means it can be done in advance, without pressure

Think about slow media cycles – holidays, long weekends

Engage with/in big news cycles – elections, budgets, Ministers visiting your community

Be proactive – the media matters.