



Conducting a Media Campaign

Making people aware that they can help keep our environment clean and beautiful is an important part of all PITCH-IN CANADA programs.

The media are strong supporters of the PITCH-IN CANADA campaign, especially at the community level. The media can be used as a very effective tool to help promote environmental **responsibility** and **action**.

A few basic things you should know about the media:

- **"Media" stands for print media (newspapers, magazines, newsletters, etc...) and electronic media (radio, television, cable, video images).** Communication with, and preparing for dealing with, media will depend on what form of the media you approach.
- **The media cover lots of "stories".** Your event or activity is one of many they **might** be interested in covering. Don't **expect** the media to cover your event just because it took place. **Understand** that the media may not always be able to cover every event, no matter how newsworthy. A "last minute" major newsbreaking story which developed just before your event may be "bad news" - for your event's chance of getting covered. However, there are ways to **enhance** your chance of being "covered". Here are some basic rules.
- **Media do look for "good" stories.** Bad news all the time can be depressing. Your "good news" story might be just the "balance" the media are waiting for on the day of your event!

Make News - Media exist to cover news. If you remember that then you are well on the way to effectively communicating with any member of the media. What is it about your event that makes it news? Or, even better, what can you do to *make your event news*?

Suggestions to draw the media's attention to your event

- **Prepare a news release** which outlines *what* you plan to do, *who* will be involved, *when*, *where*, *why* you are doing your project and *how* you plan to achieve your goal.

The media release will force you to focus on what it is you want to communicate at your event (why are you doing your event). **STICK TO YOUR FOCUS IN SUBSEQUENT INTERVIEWS WITH THE MEDIA!**

- **Remember, even if the media does not show up for the event, they may still publish your story, especially if you've done a good job preparing your release.**

PITCH-IN CANADA has prepared some sample news releases for you. You can access these at the bottom of this section. Read them carefully and you'll discover that there is a "style" to writing releases. It's called the inverted pyramid style. The facts in the first paragraph, with more and more detail as you read on. This way, even if your last few paragraphs don't get printed, the facts will stay intact and the reader will know what took place.

After you have written your release send it to:

- **Print:** The Editor/News Editor/City Editor
- **Radio:** News Department/News Editor
- **TV:** Assignment Editor

Activity Suggestion: Ask English classes to write news releases on various PITCH-IN or other environmental projects.

- **Provide background information and link your project to activities across Canada.** Indicating that you are part of a large project to help clean up Canada and the world adds extra interest to your event and story.
 - Download and provide your media with copies of other, appropriate, PITCH-IN CANADA Media Releases and alert them to the PITCH-IN CANADA Web Site where they can obtain further information about various campaigns. **You can access PITCH-IN CANADA's Media Centre at the bottom of this section.**
- **Hold you event in an accessible place** and never assume that media will know where it is.....provide a map!
- **Time your event to coincide with media deadlines.**
Call your newspaper editor (News Desk or News Editor in larger publications) to find out their "deadline"; don't plan an event for when they are "putting their publication to bed" - that's when they are really busy and will not have time to cover your event!

Same goes for television. The best time to "hit" the evening news is to plan an event between 9:30 and 10:30 in the morning. It allows the film crew to get back to the station and prepare a story for that evening's news. Your contact at a television station is the Assignment Editor.

Radio, due to its frequency, thrives on news any time of the day.

- **Plan an event within your event** to assist the media in focussing on your story. Suggestions: stage a "kick-off" to the event; prepare some of your members for interviews with the media.
 - **For information about the "Fastest Broom Contest", a great event to kick off your event, please check our [Resource Centre](#)**
- **Stage a Photo Opportunity.** A picture can convey more than an article. A few seconds on the nightly TV news can highlight your day. Make it easy for the media by "arranging" a visual activity, especially for television. TV wants ACTION - stage it for them! Wearing special clothing for your event will also add drama and excitement. Remember PITCH-IN CANADA's motto: **Action speaks louder than words!**
- **Provide different "Angles".** Especially if more than one newspaper or television station is sending a photographer or crew. Media are competitive. Give each photographer a different suggestion for a "photo opportunity" so that their photos will differ. TV crews from different stations may want different "angles" to their stories. Provide personal interviews to each station.
- **Understand the mechanics of making news.** Television crews like easy access as they are carrying heavy cameras. Make it easy for them.

All media are on a deadline. However, if you are faced with several requests for individual interviews after an event then the general rule is: TV first (to allow them to pack up their equipment as fast as possible and get on to another assignment), followed by radio and print media.

When choosing who should represent your organization/event in interviews, select the individual on the following basis: understands your project's objective, can speak articulately, is enthusiastic and, finally, is involved in the project/event. Generally speaking, young people are excellent spokespersons for the environment.