BE SEEN & HEARD

Maximize your Message in the Media
WHY IS MEDIA IMPORTANT?

Telling our story in the media helps us to:

★ Shift the narrative in mainstream media
★ Amplify our voices and our work
★ Challenge the opposition’s frame/monopoly on the conversation
★ Put pressure on targets
★ Basebuilding! Bringing in new people
★ Fundraising: raising our profile and demonstrating our work
Successful Media Coverage Requires:

- Timing
- Relationships
- Story-telling
Activist training gets Bostonians involved in fighting Islamophobia

KRISTIN TOUSSAINT

Whether focusing on fighting racist policy or learning how to interfere as a bystander, these classes aim to equip people with the skills to resist racism.

An activist voices opposition against a Muslim registry at JVP Boston's "Harriukhan solidarity march." Photo: Courtesy of Jewish Voice for Peace Boston
PART ONE:

Getting the Press to Show Up
Clarify Goals and Messaging

- What is the GOAL of the event? What would your ideal HEADLINE be?
- Who is the target AUDIENCE? What outlets will reach that audience?
- What do you want them to KNOW? What messages will resonate with that audience?
- Why is this NEWSWORTHY? What is unique, timely, creative, striking about your action?
- What are the 2-3 main messages do you want people to take away?
PLAN AHEAD

● Put together a MEDIA LIST
  ○ Do the research. Who are the local news reporters, TV assignment editors, radio producers

● Build RELATIONSHIPS
  ○ Who covers your “beat”? Get to know them! Start a conversation over email or in person

● Design the action for the camera
  ○ Think about what the media needs to make this visually & auditorily interesting

● Get your materials together
  ○ Write sample tweets, make a shot list, write your press release AHEAD
A picture is worth a thousand words
What is the ONE main message you want observers to take away?

Design your action so that a photo taken of it will get across the message you are trying to say.

Think about where it is, who the target is, what landmarks are around, what the significance of the location is.

Make art & bring signs that tell the story you want to tell.

A good sign to catch the eye of the camera has clear writing, creative & few words.
PROTEST SIGNS

- Bodega Cats
- Grab Back!
- FREE Birth Control and Palestine
- Stop Profiling Muslims
Options for alerting media about an action: “On the DL”

- Pick a different meeting place for press (don't give away the targets location)
- Embargo
- Embed a journalist
- Self-document & send to press after
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PART TWO:

We’re Here, The Press is Here, What do I do?
Activists Rally at Chicago’s O’Hare Airport Against Trump’s Order on Refugees

A total of 16 people were detained under the order for several hours at O’Hare before being released by 10:30 p.m., according to immigration attorneys at the airport.
ROLES

- **Press Liaison/Press Contact**: make eye contact & approach the press, introduce yourself, get their card or sign them in (you’ll want that info to follow up later!), schmooze, point them towards your spokespeople for interviews

- **Spokesperson**: practices messages in advance, wear clothes that set the tone or get your message across

- **Livetweeter**: give context for followers, use hashtags, tag partners & journalists/influencers in photos

- **Photographer**: Capture faces, landmarks, good signs, wide crowd shots & close ups

- **Videographer**: Get the crowd, the speeches, the chants, interview someone!
Morton Grove Muslim center rally draws crowd, rails against Trump's actions

Hundreds of people marched Sunday, Jan. 29, 2017 during a demonstration held at the Muslim Community Center in Morton Grove. The protest was against the Trump administration's policies on Immigration. (Patrick Gorski / Pioneer Press)
WHOSE VOICES?

Before you talk to press, think about:

● Who called the rally? Who is directly affected by the issues? Are you here in solidarity? What added value does your voice or your message bring?

● If you are part of the organizing, have a conversation ahead of time about whose voices you want to center. If it’s not your action, check in with the organizers.

● If you are someone whose voice is often heard, think about whose voices are usually absent of the media & encourage others to step into the spokesperson role.
A left-wing Jewish organization has stepped out to express its full support of the Black Lives Matter movement, despite recent backlash from the Jewish community over BLM’s controversial remarks regarding the Israeli occupation of Palestine.

The Jews of Color Caucus, organized in partnership with Jewish Voice for Peace, announced its solidarity with the Movement for Black Lives Friday, cementing its co-resistance against the “systematic violence against Black people in the United States.”

“As a caucus we fully endorse the Movement for Black Lives platform in its entirety without reservation,” the Jews of Color Caucus said in an e-mailed statement to Atlanta Black Star. “We do this first and foremost because it was created as a response to the sustained and increasingly visible violence against Black communities in the U.S. and globally.” This fact must be foregrounded in all discussions of the Platform, which was created to protect Black Lives.”
STAY ON MESSAGE

● You should know what the 3 most important points to get across are. If you can, practice those with your spokespeople ahead of time.

● Practice answering the basics: Who are you? Why are you here?

● Your job is to get the messages across to the audience, not answer the reporter’s questions
DEMONSTRATORS SHOW SUPPORT FOR MUSLIMS IN RESPONSE TO TRAVEL BAN
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PART THREE:

Telling our own Story
TWITTER TOP TIPS:

- Give context! Tell people what’s happening & who is there
- Use existing hashtags to put your action in an existing story, and/or create your own hashtag to frame your specific action or series of actions
- Include photos & video clips w/ text to describe what’s happening
- Tag partners & influencers in photos (up to 10) to get them to retweet you
Among the protesters at JFK was Rebecca Vilkomerson, the executive director of Jewish Voice for Peace, who pointed out on Friday night that Trump had signed the order banning refugees fleeing war on Holocaust Remembrance Day.
PHOTO TIPS:

- Make a shot list ahead of time so you know what photos you want
- Get landmarks & signs in the frame that help tell the message
- Take a variety of shots, both close ups of faces and wide crowd shots to display the size & scope
- Match facial expressions to the tone of the action (if it's a vigil, don't have all the people smiling!)
Video & Facebook Live Tips

- Bring an external microphone if possible
- Clips of chants, speakers, crowd & passerby reactions
- Interviews with speakers & participants
- Have a plan to do a quick edit turn around for a final video that doesn’t need to be more than 2 min

- For FB live:
  - Keep it going for at least 15 min, enough time to build an audience
  - Narrate what’s going on, repeat a couple times where you are & why
  - Keep moving, walk around
  - Interview people!
WHAT GOES IN A PRESS RELEASE?

- Headline, date, press contact’s email & phone #
- Who, what, where, when why information
- The press release should be written in the past tense like the article you’d want to see
- At least one quote ascribed to an individual with your core message
- Attach a photo if possible or say photos available upon request
- Boilerplate description of the organization(s) that put the event together

- ALWAYS paste press release in the body of the email (not as an attachment) and send to journalist list in the BCC field.
In Boston, a march for solidarity with Jews and Muslims

Wednesday night’s march at the Boston Common was organized by the advocacy group Jewish Voice for Peace-Boston.
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PART FOUR:

Beyond the protests, Getting our messages out there
THE BRIEF, RADICAL HISTORY OF THE ‘REFUGEES ARE WELCOME HERE’ POSTER

BY LUCY WESTCOTT ON 2/3/17 AT 12:35 PM

Micah Bazant’s "Refugees Are Welcome Here" poster is seen during a protest against Donald Trump's travel ban at Chicago's O'Hare International Airport on January 28.
Op-eds

- Timing matters
- Keep it short (800 words or less, check your local paper’s specifications)
- The first paragraph is the most important. Make it timely, relevant, and personal. Follow a general argument flow:
  - identify a problem
  - make it personal
  - bring in evidence to support your claims
  - use social math, put statistics into comparisons that people can understand
  - wrap it up to a solution, policy or a call to action.
Letters to the Editor

- Respond directly to an article or op-ed
- Make it timely, send ASAP
- Keep it short (150-200 words, check the paper’s specifications)
- Only try to get one (1!) point across

Writing to the Public Editor//Ombudsman:
Some news outlets have “readers representatives” like the New York Times’ public editor or NPR’s ombudsman who receive feedback and evaluate reporting & editorial choices.
Pitching Stories

- Research
- Subject line
- Relevance to the news cycle
- Bio & examples of past work
- Keep it short
- Exclusivity?
- Avoid attachments
- Follow up
TOOLS & RESOURCES

- Planning media for actions: checklists and templates
- JVP Media Kit
- The Op-ed Project’s submission list
- Contact US!
  - Naomi@jvp.org for support with press outreach, planning, op-ed editing & placement
  - Granate@jvp.org for social media