How to Get Free (sort of) News Media Exposure

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New realities: 2003-2010*

- Where 18-64 year olds are turning for news:
  - Television: 82% ↓ 62%
  - Newspaper: 43% ↓ 27%
  - Radio: 22% ↓ 16%
  - **Internet:** 14% ↑ 49%

- Internet=newspapers for 50-64 year olds
- Internet=television for college grads
- Internet=television for $75,000 HH

*Pew Research Center for the People & the Press, December 2010
What does this mean?

- Nice story on local TV: 6 in 10 people will see it, only if EVERY television viewer is watching that news station, and it’s gone in less than 3 minutes.

- Front page newspaper story: at MOST 1 in 4 people will see it, and it’s gone tomorrow.

- Nice interview on the radio: at most 1 in 6 people will hear it, and it’s gone in less than 5 minutes.
What does this mean, 2.0?

- It’s a marathon
- No single story is a magic potion
- The trick is reasonably consistent exposure

- You decide: 5 items in the local section of the newspaper over two months or a front-page story or 3 positive web reviews?
The real cost: sweat equity

- You
- Staff member
- Volunteer
- Member
- Freelancer (you probably don’t need a PR agency)

_It’s not rocket science, but someone has to own it and spend consistent/modest time on it._
What do we have to promote?

• Key: it doesn’t matter what I think
• Key 2.0: it only matters what editors, reporters, and bloggers are interested in

• Always assess our museum from the outside in:

  “What would the news media find noteworthy about our museum... not what we’re most proud of in our museum.”
In the last month or so

- 9/11 ceremony by retired FDNY chapter
- Husband-wife volunteer couple
- Upcoming Navy’s birthday activities
- Museum gala 8/31
- New Year’s Eve for monthlies
- Veterans Day for monthlies
- Toys for Tots for monthlies
- Guest column on military anniversaries
- Google Street View announcement
Our potential exposure checklist

- Vols/Emps with interesting personal stories
- Vols/Emps in suburbs with a community newspaper
- What awards do we have or that we can apply for
- Any business milestones?
- Anything positive about attendance growth or ???
- Any museum anniversary dates this year?
- Any ship’s history anniversary dates this year?
- Any military history dates of relevance this year?
- Museum events on the calendar
- Own the patriotic holidays
Our potential exposure checklist

- Guest op-eds on current news/affairs
- Letter to the editor opportunities
- Noteworthy donations by the museum
- Noteworthy donations to the museum
- New hires
- What do local editorial calendars contain?
  - Example: “Buffalo’s Hidden Gems”
  - “Best of” reader and viewer polls are all the rage
- New features of the museum
Getting back to the local media

- Audit local newspapers (www) for
  - Reporters/their beats
  - Editors/their sections or topics
  - Editorial calendars
- Ditto for radio & TV with local newscasts
- Search for most-popular city & tourist websites
- Search for most-popular local bloggers (sometimes it’s reporters)
Then make the connection

- Match story ideas with newspapers’ sections or news media outlet
  - Ex-USS Midway cook for the local food section
  - Kids’ activities for a “blogger for moms”
  - Husband/wife volunteer couple for a columnist
  - Aircraft restoration for the military beat reporter
  - Air Boss on military event anniversary
Pitching the news media

- News releases are dinosaurs
- Almost exclusively email: concise/bulleted/100 words (max.)
  - Story/item idea
  - Why it’s relevant
  - Follow-up museum contact info
- Almost anyone can do this with forethought & organization
The Bigger Picture

Almost none of the foregoing reach the tourists!

San Diego:

3 million local residents
20 million overnight visitors every year

Tourists are the “large muscle group” for Midway
Hit ‘em when they’re in town

- Collect, audit every tourist publication
- What do we have that fits where?
  - Evergreen, long lead
  - Are we on all the tourist publication/car rental maps?
- Listings usually are free
- Convention & Visitors Bureau
  - A go-to resource: 2012 Japan; 2013 China
  - FAM trips, etc.
More free exposure

- Film & Video Shoots
  - Local or statewide film bureau/commission
    - *Our Holy Grail: American Idol* (20 million households, twice)
  - Local photographers
  - Local advertising & PR agencies

- Ticket donations as fundraisers
  - 800-1,000 neighborhood programs a year, for the price of 4 tickets each
  - Automated through website at no cost to the museum
More free exposure

- Hosting key groups aboard (we’re lucky to have the room)
  - Girl Scouts
  - American Red Cross
  - Blood Bank
  - Poinsettia Bowl (college football)
  - 9/11 ceremony
  - to name a few...
More free exposure

- The future is in social media, *remember the stats at the beginning?*
  - Most reporters are bloggers: always reporting
  - Some newspapers now have online TV stations
    - [www.utsandiego.com/tv/](http://www.utsandiego.com/tv/)
- Facebook presence (a volunteer can do this)
  - 12,000 followers in 3 years
  - Material for other exposure is material for Facebook
  - [www.facebook.com/ussmidwaymuseum](http://www.facebook.com/ussmidwaymuseum)
More free exposure

- Speakers Bureau
  - All it takes is an organizer
What we’ve learned

- It’s a marathon
- Strategic exposure requires only an investment of time and almost no expense
- It requires an organizer
- It requires constant awareness
- It requires follow-through on a priority
- A variety of people can make it happen
And Finally

- The ROI, over time, can be enormous!

No media exposure means someone hasn’t made it a constant priority!