



LOCAL GOVERNMENT LEADERSHIP ACADEMY



Communications & The Media

The Art of Media Relations

Jeremy Dunn
Jeremy@LBMG.ca

Laura Ballance
Laura@LBMG.ca

@LBMG_PR
@jdunn14
@LauraBallance





Who We Are

- Laura Ballance Media Group
 - 12 person agency
 - Clients include:
 - Pacific National Exhibition
 - Vancouver Int'l Auto Show
 - GLOBE Foundation
 - Forest Products Association
 - UBCM Convention
 - Canadian Forest Products

@LBMG_PR
@jdunn14
@LauraBallance



Who We Are

- LBMG Philosophy
 - Relationships are king
 - We do the leg work and are ALWAYS available
 - Most media will take the path of least resistance
 - Do the work... be available... get the story
 - Everyone has a story to tell

@LBMG_PR
@jdunn14
@LauraBallance

- Everyone has a story to tell!



Seminar Overview

- Knowing the Media
 - Insider's View
 - Talking to the Media
 - Choosing the Medium
- Managing the Message
 - Social Media & Online
 - Negative Stories & Letters
 - When & How to Respond

@LBMG_PR
@jdunn14
@LauraBallance



Media Relations

- Media Relations involves working directly with persons responsible for the editorial (news & features)
- Your message needs to be accurate, professionally delivered, believed and understood
- Relationships are key
 - In good times & in bad
- Your audience is Media

@LBMG_PR
@jdunn14
@LauraBallance



Advantages vs Challenges

- Media coverage has more credibility because it is not purchased
- Anyone can buy an ad, not everyone can convince a reporter to cover a story
- No direct cost
- Media have ultimate final control

@LBMG_PR
@jdunn14
@LauraBallance



Knowing The Media

- They get hundreds of emails & dozens of phone calls
- High pressure & extreme deadlines
- Yes... Many are cynical - especially of government
- Need to answer “Why do I care?”

@LBMG_PR
@jdunn14
@LauraBallance



Knowing The Media

- The Basics
 - Identify yourself
 - Ask if they're on deadline
 - Get to the point
- Exclusive or Not?
- Off the Record (is it really off the record?)

@LBMG_PR
@jdunn14
@LauraBallance



Knowing The Media

- Do Not!
 - Tell the reporter how to cover the story
 - Ask for the story before it goes to print / air
 - Insult them or their colleagues

@LBMG_PR
@jdunn14
@LauraBallance



Knowing The Media

- Print (Newspapers)
 - Reach large audience
 - Avg 75% readership in BC
 - Lots to choose from
 - Reach different audiences
 - Cover news (PR / Stories)
 - In depth
 - Features
 - Local Government

@LBMG_PR
@jdunn14
@LauraBallance



Knowing The Media

- Print (Newspapers)
 - Get to know the paper
 - Know the publisher
 - Know the editor
 - Is there a beat reporter?
 - Make regular contact
 - Proactive media = Pitch one at a time

@LBMG_PR
@jdunn14
@LauraBallance



Knowing The Media

- Radio
 - Reach large audience
 - Active listening
 - Drive immediacy
 - Cover “news of the day”
 - Pitch the news director or assignment & show producers
 - News stories vs. Talk Show

@LBMG_PR
@jdunn14
@LauraBallance



Knowing The Media

- Radio
 - Be ready to be interviewed on the spot
 - They're always rolling!
 - Speak in 7 second bites
 - Be entertaining
 - Offer to go in person
 - Timing is crucial

@LBMG_PR
@jdunn14
@LauraBallance



Knowing The Media

- Television
 - “What will I see?” = visuals
 - Big Impact...
 - Local news
 - Regional news
 - Local Cable
 - Covers news + “people” stories

@LBMG_PR
@jdunn14
@LauraBallance



Knowing The Media

- Television
 - Must be available in person
 - Interview Tips
 - Find the best location
 - Look at the interviewer (not camera)
 - Don't assume they know your issue
 - 10-15 second sound bites

@LBMG_PR
@jdunn14
@LauraBallance



Knowing The Media

- Online / Web
 - Lots of former newspapers are now online
 - Written & Video
 - Play a key role in local government media
 - Know who they are
 - Ask the right questions

@LBMG_PR
@jdunn14
@LauraBallance



Social Media

- Online conversation / sharing / posting - interactive, free & accessible
- Why Social?
 - Reach
 - Accessibility
 - Interaction/conversation
 - Sharing

@LBMG_PR
@jdunn14
@LauraBallance



Social Media

- Where
 - Facebook: almost 90%
 - Twitter: almost 10%
 - Doubled in a year
 - Content drives use
 - Interaction drives effectiveness

@LBMG_PR
@jdunn14
@LauraBallance



Social Media

- Facebook
 - Create a profile
 - Add Friends
 - Create a page
 - Get liked
 - Create an event
 - Get attendees

@LBMG_PR
@jdunn14
@LauraBallance



Social Media

- Twitter
 - Build a page
 - Write a Tweet
 - Comment on issues #tags
 - Re-Tweet posts you like
 - Follow people you have interest in
 - Build your own following
 - Instant debate + Twitter stalking

@LBMG_PR
@jdunn14
@LauraBallance



Social Media

- Media Relations
 - Follow media (journalists)
 - Comment & Share
 - Like posts
 - Tailor your messages on the fly

@LBMG_PR
@jdunn14
@LauraBallance



Social Media

- Optimizing
 - Social is YOU
 - Does not have to take time
 - But easily can
 - Is not right for every person or every business
 - Are people talking about it - do they want to?

@LBMG_PR
@jdunn14
@LauraBallance



Social Media

- Negative
- Blogs
 - Monitor discussions on your blog and others
 - Clear set of standards for comments
 - Remove those that violate

@LBMG_PR
@jdunn14
@LauraBallance



Social Media

- Negative
- Social Posts
 - Identify the type of feedback
 - Respond if warranted
 - Avoid removing posts that simply offer a different opinion

@LBMG_PR
@jdunn14
@LauraBallance



Message Management

- Letter to Editor / Opinion
 - When to do it
 - Responding to a key issue
 - Clarifying the facts
 - Municipal position statement
 - Do we respond?
 - More yes than no
 - Avoid being personal
 - The power of Google

@LBMG_PR
@jdunn14
@LauraBallance



Message Management

- Unfair or Inaccurate Media
 - Is it actually wrong?
 - Prepare evidence
 - Call the reporter first
 - Ask for a correction
 - Web only correction is key
 - If all else fails - contact management

@LBMG_PR
@jdunn14
@LauraBallance



Generating Opportunities

- Proactive is Important
 - Speak at public events + tell the media about it
 - Offer to write a column or submit opinion pieces on a regular basis
 - Send in photos & cutlines
 - Pick up the phone!

@LBMG_PR
@jdunn14
@LauraBallance



Generating Opportunities

- Directed Content
 - Print & online
 - Not advertorial
 - But does cost \$\$
 - Achieved through partnership
 - Does your issue align with their coverage?
 - Health / Home
 - Events / Community

@LBMG_PR
@jdunn14
@LauraBallance



Crisis Communications

- Have a plan in advance
- Single spokesperson
- Pick the right location
- Be honest
- Don't try to hide things
- Be respectful of deadlines & media competition

@LBMG_PR
@jdunn14
@LauraBallance



Media Relations Summary

- Have a plan
- Help reporters get their job done
- Be honest
- Find a unique angle
- Be sensitive to deadlines
- Follow up on the interview

@LBMG_PR
@jdunn14
@LauraBallance



Media Relations @ Home

- Questions to ask
 - Does your local government have a communications plan?
 - Is your local government website effective?
 - Is your advertising working?
 - Does your local government have a relationship with local media

@LBMG_PR
@jdunn14
@LauraBallance



Media Relations @ Home

- Questions to ask
 - Are your spokespersons identified and trained?
 - Do you have a crisis plan?
 - Are you using social media - correctly?

@LBMG_PR
@jdunn14
@LauraBallance



Partnerships & Publicity

Questions

Laura Ballance: Laura@LBMG.ca @LauraBallance

Jeremy Dunn: Jeremy@LBMG.ca @Jdunn14

@LBMG_PR